

# RELIGION IN LIFE

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# Some Barriers Blocking the March to the New World

G. BROMLEY OXNAM

THE march of the Hebrews toward "The Promised Land" is a fitting symbol of the age-old struggle of man to improve his lot. From the beginning of organized social life, mankind has looked forward to the glad day when the collective life will be molded a little nearer the heart's desire.

The Athenian dreamed of a day when liberty might rule among men. He did not seek liberty as an end in itself, but rather as a means by which man might be able to create the beautiful, develop the sciences, and grow to full-statured personality. Unfortunately, the leaders of Athens did not think in terms of political liberty for women, nor did they recognize the contradiction that lay in the assumption that a slave base was essential to the liberty of free men. But they did dream of and struggle for a new world.

The Roman conceived of his new world in terms of law and order. He felt that liberty without order makes for chaos. He insisted that man builds permanently only in so far as he erects the social structure upon foundations of law and order. The Twelve Tables of the law stand quite properly as the symbol of the Roman ideal. It is not difficult to understand, granted these premises, why the Roman at times argued that liberty might be denied rightfully in the interests of order.

However, at the very moment of Rome's greatest power, there was within the empire the dream of yet another world, a social order wherein the slaves might become free men. This ideal of cosmopolitan equality grew out of the teachings of the early Christian Church and the philosophy of the Stoics. When Paul looked upon Onesimus, the runaway slave from the house of Philemon, he saw in Onesimus something more than a slave. He beheld a beloved brother.

Different concepts have represented the dreams of men as they have looked toward the Promised Land that is ever ahead. Professor C. Delisle Burns in his admirable essay "Political Ideals" has traced the development of this dream of the Promised Land from the days of the Greek, through the Middle Ages with its dream of world unity, the Renaissance with its ideal of sovereignty, through the period of revolutionary rights when men sang of and fought for liberty, equality, and fraternity, into the days

of modern nationalism and individualism, reaching at last the present when perplexed mankind hears the conflicting challenges of capitalist captains, socialist slogans, and communist commands.

Man gives lip service to sublime ethical ideals, but lives in an order that frustrates the realization of the ideals to which he gives formal allegiance. He argues that the supreme good is personality, that all else is instrumental and that society must use all of its possessions and abilities as instruments whereby the personalities of all men may be enriched. Man talks of equality of opportunity, and of brotherhood; he prays to a common Father and insists that all belong to one great human family. He argues that co-operation, and not selfish competition, is the law of progress and declares that love is not alone a transforming power, but is the cohesive agent whereby society is unified. But in the midst of his proud proclamation of the ideal he hears the low cry of the child at work in the factories of the Orient. The News Reel flashes before his eyes pictures of a bonus army marching on Washington, and he hears the leader of these men declare, "We were heroes in 1917. We are destitute to-day. We are 100 per cent Americans." As this article is written, a nearby hotel is picketed by union men who carry sandwich signboards reading ". . . Hotel is unfair to union labor." Over the hotel entrance a large sign hangs, and on it are the words ". . . Hotel is spending \$50,000 for alterations to help the unemployed." The "brothers" in the union argue that the "brothers" in the hotel are using the depression as an excuse to employ men at starvation wages and remodel the hotel at low cost. The "brothers" in the hotel declare that the "brothers" in the union make impossible demands at a time when the hotel is operating at heavy losses. The richest land in the world is in financial distress. Millions walk the streets. Skilled hands are idle. Trained minds are rebellious. Disillusioned smiles flit across the seamed faces of aging men and women who have heard of old age insurance, but who stand in line to receive the dole of private charity. The dream of world law and order comes to an abrupt end as the activities of Japan in Shanghai and Manchuria awaken us and we behold the possibility of a new world conflict. Two of the most powerful nations in the world are not members of the League of Nations or the World Court. The boundary lines of the new map of Europe are lines of friction points. The Versailles Treaty created new nations and released new nationalistic forces in Europe, while at the same time it reordered the economic life of Europe in such fashion that the realignments may lead to conflict. Germany is on the verge of Fascism, which may be but the first

step toward communism. In the United States an election is at hand. The planks in the party platforms are but platitudes carefully phrased to win the votes of the unthinking. These platforms, in a sense quite apart from the prohibition issue, are, in the cynical expression of the collegian, "all wet." At the base of things millions yearn for abundant life. The marching girls in a parade of striking textile operatives carried a banner upon which the words "Bread and Roses" were inscribed. James Oppenheim caught the full significance of this challenge and wrote:

"As we come marching, marching unnumbered women dead  
Go crying through our singing their ancient song of bread;  
Small art and love and beauty their drudging spirits knew—  
Yes, it's bread we fight for—but we fight for roses, too."

The technical engineer who has mastered the problems of the air states that those parts of a plane that do not lift constitute what is technically known as parasitical resistance. Parasites who neither labor nor serve travel about the country spending money they have inherited and, with cane in hand and hat on the side of the head, in a mood of supercilious apartness declare "Swinehood hath no remedy." They do not know that the men in the mines, in the dark below, have prayed to the God of the heavens, in the light above, to "Fling us a handful of stars." These people, busy with bridge, may never have heard of Lanier or Untermeyer, but certain it is that the day will come when men are lifted from the sty to the stars. But to-day we see the robots at work. True to Capek's awful forecast, the robots, not because of Helena Glory's change of the formula whereby they are manufactured, but because God has created man a little lower than the angels, are touched with soul and there is seething and striving in these bits of soul which carry within them significant portent.

Edwin Markham long since saw the man "bowed by the weight of the centuries." "He leans," says the poet, "upon his hoe and gazes upon the ground. The emptiness of the ages in his face, and on his back the burden of the world." Millions are repeating to-day the questions that rose in Markham's mind yesterday when he looked for the first time upon Millet's immortal canvas. "Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow? Whose breath blew out the light within this brain? How will you ever straighten up this shape: Touch it again with immortality; give it back the upward looking and the light; rebuild in it the music and the dreams? How will the future reckon with this man?"

Why is it that with all our religious idealism and our reiterated ethical pronunciamientos we fail to make progress that is reasonably rapid? Why

does the communist laugh us to scorn when we talk of a peaceful transition from the injustice of to-day to the justice of to-morrow? Why does the communist insist that conflict is inevitable, that the state is but the tool of the capitalist to maintain property rights, that religion is an opiate and that the truest service is found in preparing first of all for revolution and secondly for building under temporary dictatorship an order that is to emancipate mankind? It must be quite evident that numerous answers can be given such queries.

The writer assumes that he is addressing men and women whom this world has treated reasonably well, whose positions are quite secure, and whose stake in the present order is large. Upon this assumption, he makes bold to set down three barriers that in the group to which he writes block the march to the new world:

*First, the major barrier blocking our progress to the new world is the fact that progressive religionists, social theorists, and the like, have busied themselves with cleverly phrased statements of ideals and caustic criticisms of the present order, and, unfortunately in so doing, have given scant attention to the problem of mechanics, to the question of finding techniques whereby ideals may be translated into actualities.*

In the introductory chapter of R. H. Tawney's recent volume entitled *Equality* the following lines appear:

"There is a problem of externals—of machinery, organization, and technique; but there is also a problem that is more properly, perhaps, to be described as internal, since it is concerned with the objects for the attainment of which technique is to be employed, and with the principles to be accepted as the basis of organization. It is conceivable that, in the affairs of society as in those of individuals, clarity as to ends may be conducive to promptitude in the application of means, and that one step toward getting on with the job of building the house may be to agree as to the kind of house which is agreeable to live in."

Tawney is too clear a thinker to lose himself in contradictions, but it is interesting to note another quotation in the concluding chapter. He writes, "Though the ideal of an equal distribution of material wealth may continue to elude us, it is necessary, nevertheless, to make haste towards it, not because such wealth is the most important of man's treasures, but to prove that it is not . . . It is possible that the ultimate goods of human life, which belong to the realm where to divide is not to take away, may more easily be attained, when the instruments and means are less greedily grasped and more freely shared." The point is that clarity as to ends is not enough; means are essential if ideals are to be realized.

It is just here that churchmen and social analysts are remiss. Of

course, we dare not evade the question of values. We are reasonably well agreed in the field of values, but the moment the question of mechanics is raised church groups talk in many tongues and the discussions are but a modern example of the ancient Tower of Babel. We denounce profit-making economy and call for the establishment of a personality-making economy. The practical man interrupts us and asks, "How do you propose to make this shift? Upon what means do you rely?" A careful perusal of the pronouncements of Christian bodies from the Jerusalem Conference to the recent utterances of great denominations reveals major emphasis upon the ideal, the end, the goal, and a tendency to rest in such phrases as "the Kingdom of God," "property for use rather than property for power," and "the substitution of the motive of service for the acquisitive instinct." There is all too little facing of the engineering task, too little consideration of the mechanics demanded. Men talk about "controlling the controllable" and of "economic planning" and vote unanimously for the use of science on the one hand and of religion on the other, for the purpose of insuring social well-being, but the unanimity vanishes the moment that a practical proposal is presented which is offered as a means of achieving the end. We are witnessing the transformation of many a constructive progressive into a clever cynic. A clever brain can ridicule Glenn Frank's latest book by stating there is within it more thunder than dawn, but writing such a statement does not dispel darkness. Many a radical turns to the comfortable study chair and joins the ranks of the "tired radicals." Men who proclaimed constructive ideals yesterday play the part of the carping critic to-day when practical problems are under discussion. Conferences on such problems might in the interests of economy be cancelled and victrola records substituted, since the same speakers deliver the same speeches and get the same results. The sameness becomes sinful since mere reiteration of ideals while remaining silent in regard to means is a waste of time, and waste in days of depression is sinful.

We insist that economic practices be judged by ethical criteria. We possess the criteria. We judge the practices. We condemn activities that violate the ethical ideal. Immediately those who are responsible for unethical practices respond in one of two ways. Either they attack those who pronounce judgment, seek to destroy them and their kind, dig themselves in to hold present positions, and dream of the army, not alone as an agency for national defense, but as now declared as an agency for economic defense; or they turn to the judges, admit the accuracy of the judgment, repent of their unrighteousness, and ask, "How can our practices be



changed so as to square with the ethical criteria?" It is at this point that general terms prove valueless and specific propositions become imperative. It is here that we are at fault and our fault constitutes a major barrier blocking the march to the new world.

*A second barrier lies in our failure to realize that time is of the essence of the contract in this matter, that the patience of the masses is well-nigh exhausted, that discussion of revolution has gone beyond the academic stage, and that the moment is at hand when the engineering and organizing genius of the land must master the mechanics essential to the realization of valid ethical ideals, create an adequate machine, and put the machine to work.*

Professor Harry F. Ward, in his volume *Our Economic Morality and the Ethic of Jesus*, writes:

"The problem of production cannot be solved until the same technical skill that has been applied to producing things is applied to their use; until we have an economics of distribution and consumption as well as of production. This will be an economics of plan; it will not leave the use of goods to the arbitrament of conflict or the decision of chance. It will substitute the measured adjustment of effort to the rationally determined standard of wants for the chaos of our present fortuitous jumble of ignorant cross purposes. Therefore it will not limit and defeat the long-developed producer's morality of hard and honest work for others, but the sabotage of a financial economy which directs men's eyes to profit rather than to the human consequences of their efforts. It will be a social economy and therefore will have and develop a social morality—that is, it will not make the development of human life through economic activities a secondary and subservient end to the making of money. It will give dignity and worth to economic pursuits by making conscious to those engaged in them their eventual consequences in the lives of others. It will relieve the moral stress and strain, remove the sense of futility and injury, which now oppress us, by making it possible for people to supply their own needs with a real and demonstrable knowledge that they are also helping to meet the needs of others. . . . The root of the incapacity of our present economic behavior is that it has divided the parts of the economic process—production, distribution, and consumption—and set them against each other."

It must be realized that this work cannot be postponed until the scholar has worked up his cross references and inserted the proper number of footnotes to justify academic approval. Of course, while stressing as the writer seeks to do the question of mechanics and the time element involved, the end of it all must be kept in mind constantly. Professor Ward does this in a vivid paragraph:

"It is the vision of ends that Western life lacks. It has no sense of direction. It is all motion—at unequaled speed—but what is its goal? It is atomic, chaotic—not yet corporate. Why do its millions work and fight and breed and die? Do even their leaders know? For what shall man live? For all, says Communism. For each, says Individualism. For both, says the ethic of Jesus. Having in the



course of its development rescued the individual from both the early communal society of the East and the aristocratic society of the West that he may find himself in a voluntary brotherhood, this religious morality is not to be deceived by the suicidal separatism of individualistic democracy nor the equally fatal subordination which dogmatic Communism imposes upon personality. If there is one thing that the ethic of Jesus can help an inevitably collectivist world to remember, it is the creative function of the individual. If there is anything it can help those who have been nurtured in the individualistic tradition to appreciate, it is that personality is social in its origin and nature, needing the Great Society for its fulfillment."

With such a vision in mind, do we who seek to represent Christ in church and school lend our talents to those practical proposals within our local communities which as means translate ends into actualities?

*A third barrier (and the writer lists it because, as he stated earlier, those to whom the article is written live in a world that is reasonably secure, whose income, while not great, has been sufficient to keep the wolf from the door) lies in the fact that most of us prefer to risk the deluge later and enjoy the privileges now than to co-operate with emancipating programs which may entail the loss of some of our comforts and privileges, reduce a bit of our prestige based upon possessions, but which may make the communal life richer and the lives of larger numbers freer.* How often the political leader in working out his election calculations states, "We can count upon him to favor that proposition since his economic interests are involved." Why is it that a man can own a firetrap apartment, make high returns upon the amount of money invested in the building, and associate in good society? Is it because many of us are perfectly willing to own securities which bring us fair return without troubling ourselves to ask what is the nature of the business we own and what are its practices in the field of human relationships? We look upon the autocratic kings who fought democracy to the last ditch and we find it difficult to understand them. We think of the ancient landlord who kept wide tracts of land for hunting purposes and denied half-starved peasants the right to till the soil as an anti-social being. It is a little bit harder for us to examine our own income and ask, "Is it based upon service rendered and need, or does it come unearned, beyond our needs, and thus give us power over others that our own abilities would never warrant? Do we not, when the issue is squarely before us, oppose that which Tawney calls "the organization of society upon the basis of function"? He declares:

"It means, first, that proprietary rights shall be maintained when they are accompanied by the performance of service and abolished when they are not. It means, second, that the producers shall stand in a direct relation to the community

for whom production is carried on, so that their responsibility to it may be obvious and unmistakable, not lost, as at present, through their immediate subordination to shareholders whose interest is not service but gain. It means, in the third place, that the obligation for the maintenance of the service shall rest upon the professional organization of those who perform it, and that, subject to the supervision and criticism of the consumer, those organizations shall exercise so much voice in the government of industry as may be needed to secure that the obligation is discharged."

Is it not true that our own refusal to give up our own special privileges unless forced to do so constitutes a barrier?

The point of this entire article lies in the simple fact that the mere statement "Love one another" means nothing until love is expressed in conduct. Mercy is an ideal, but before it becomes a reality man must find the Good Samaritan. Righteousness demands the fearless Amos and justice calls for the transformed Zaccheus. We know God is father, men are brothers, and life is of infinite worth. But, we must find the way, the truth, and the life—in a word, the means whereby society may become in practice the family of God and abundant life become the lot of all men.

# The Parable of the Prodigal Son

ADOLF DEISSMANN

**W**E have no difficult textual problem to solve in the parable of the prodigal son. We have before us neither papyrus sheets with mutilated margins, faded letters and destroyed ends of lines, as in the *Logia* of Oxyrhynchus, nor two or three deviating textual traditions, nor even greater variations in the ancient manuscripts of the Gospels. The text is to be found simply in Luke 15 and is transmitted to us here on the whole without important variations, and it is the general opinion of commentators that the text is well preserved. Moreover, the genuineness of the passage cannot be seriously doubted. It is established with as great a degree of certainty as can be attained by means of historical science.

The wording of the text likewise presents no real difficulties. The entire crystalline transparency of Jesus' manner of speech has been preserved here in an absolutely classic way.

The difficulties which the parable of the prodigal son presents to the interpreter of the Bible lie not in the parable itself, but are introduced from without. And we can really explain the origin of all of these difficulties from the fact that the parable has not been treated as a parable.

This is true of the parables of Jesus in general. The history of the exposition of these parables, as it lies before us in hundreds of old and new works in our theological libraries, is the story, to be sure, of many good perceptions, but it also is the story of many errors, clever errors and stupid errors. Countless biblical scholars have not understood the nature of parables. They have substituted for the self-evident fact that something dark should be made clear through a parable the theory that through the parables of Jesus certain truths should be concealed. This doctrine has its roots in a very ancient misunderstanding of a word of Jesus himself, the word concerning the aim of parables.

The tradition of this world is two-fold: according to Mark 4. 11f. and Luke 8. 10 Jesus had declared as the object of his parables to make those that see blind, to harden the people, and hinder their conversion; according to Matthew 13. 13f. Jesus had spoken in parables because the people were blind; in order, therefore, to restore sight to the blind and to help the obdurate people by pictorial instruction. We can recognize in this last tradition the true and genuine meaning of Jesus. On the other hand, in the first-named tradition there is to be found an early misunderstanding of the intention of Jesus arising from the sad experiences of a later time.

Nevertheless, the misunderstanding gained an enormous influence on the exposition of the parables of Jesus over one and a half millennia of Christian theology. The rich and interesting story of the exposition of the parables was fully described more than a generation ago in a brilliant book by a young Berlin minister, Adolf Jülicher, soon thereafter professor in Marburg. His history of the exposition of the parables was in many points a judgment upon the false paths of exegesis. Jülicher himself, in conjunction with prominent predecessors, put the nature of parables in true light with a penetration which is perhaps here and there exaggerated, but which is everywhere stimulating. He worked out the method of the exposition of parables cleverly, and later in a new, great, learned work expounded all of the parables of Jesus. Indeed, all biblical exegetes owe much to this book; it has exercised an extraordinary disciplinary effect on the method of the exposition of parables.

What is a parable? A parable is an expanded form of simile, as the allegory is an expanded form of metaphor. And the nature of the parable and the allegory is seen when one recognizes the simple types of simile and metaphor: The simile puts side by side similar objects. The metaphor replaces the object to be compared with a different similar one. The simile is true speech which does not need to be interpreted; the metaphor is figurative speech which needs an interpretation. Just so is it with the higher types, the parable and the allegory. The parable is devised so that we will understand the one similar point from the analogous story or portrayal which is presented; the allegory is a discourse whose essential elements are clearly metaphors; and all these essential elements need interpretation if they are to be understood.

The whole secret of the interpretation of parables lies in the fact that parables are to be interpreted as parables and not as allegories. The allegorizing exegesis of parables has been an inveterate evil.

To be sure, I believe (as opposed to Jülicher) that Jesus also used allegories, for example, the story of the four kinds of soil, and the tares among the wheat, but I agree with Jülicher when he demands that parables are not to be explained, but to be investigated to discover the *tertium comparationis*.

Our parable of the prodigal son has not escaped sacrifice to the false allegorizing exegesis. People have asked: whom does Jesus understand by the father? whom by the two sons? what do the possessions which the younger son took with him signify? All such questions are unauthorized formulations of the allegorizing interpreter. And there is a motley selec-

tion of answers which the ingenuity and meddling curiosity of the allegorists have ready.

The father is Abraham, says one; the father is Jesus himself, says another; most, the father signifies God. The two sons are the Jews and the Christians, or the Jews and the heathen, Judaism and heathendom, angels and men. The goods are the freedom of the will, or body and soul, or the law, both natural and written. The citizen is one of the demons, or the devil, or a type of philosophy.

And so the allegoristic application goes on, no allegorist agreeing with another in details; everyone celebrates the feast of his own fantasy. But all are at one in making artificially unintelligible a story that is entirely clear, in which there is no riddle at all to be solved, and in which only simplicity and beauty are to be seen. We have then reached the entrance into an understanding of our parable when we see that here lie no veiled truths, here angels and devils and law and philosophy must not be extorted from the wording. Here rather we must sit down at Jesus' feet as the simple Galileans who first heard these words from his lips, as children to whom a story is told, a story as it takes place every day in life, a story of a real father, of real sons, of real hunger and real need, and of a real return home.

Let us glance first at the external, linguistic features of this highly interesting story.

We hear the style of the narrative of the people, not, to be sure, entirely vulgar, but yet genuinely popular. In spite of reiterated participial constructions, the parataxis predominates, the simple succession of chief sentences as in the contemporary popular texts from Egypt. That is not specifically "Semitic," but specifically popular. Moreover, many individual linguistic features can be explained from contemporary popular texts. But we must now come to the parable itself.

The oftener I read this passage the more I am impressed with the complete absence of sentimentality in the narrative. Everything is told with a harsh and often blunt realism, just as it is in the world, and as life is, harsh and blunt. The commentators have here often committed the mistake of wanting to be better artists than the creator of this work of art; they have read into it tears—tears of the son, tears which roll from the silvery-white beard of the father, tears which are shed on the departure of the son by the mother, who is not even mentioned by Jesus. This artificial sentimentalizing of the parable, with its maudlin effeminateness, is

connected with the weak, sentimental picture of Jesus which has been widely propagated and has often been dominant in Christian art, preaching and piety. Its false, sickening sweetness strikes a genuinely masculine nature as effeminate, and a truly feminine nature as unmanly. That, as has been said, has nothing at all to do with the real Jesus who had both the balsam and the sword. The omission of any overloading of the story with descriptions of feelings, the omission in particular of all little expedients of merely external effect, reveal in this parable the great artist who sketches a drawing with the simplest lines, but to which succeeding schools of painters make pilgrimages.

With truly concise simplicity, the story begins. "A man had two sons." A single line, commonplace in content, seen by everyone here and there in the neighborhood, perhaps experienced in one's own family. And yet, when Jesus begins thus, we have a presentiment that here comes nothing trivial, here begins the fate of a man, of a family. In rapid succession there unfold the individual pictures of this human destiny—the demand of the younger son, which the father without wasting a word fulfills, the speedy departure of the adventurer, and, as something to be taken for granted (magnificent irony of the narrator), the wasting of the goods in riotous living. All of the knowing thoughts inserted by the exegetes, whether it was wise of the father to give the money to the son, whether the mother was yet alive, and all other such questions, the narrator would silence with a smiling glance. The very omissions have force, and no foolish question will break his silence.

The rest is told with broader portrayal, after everything hitherto had gone forward in rapid succession. The time of want comes, the money is spent, the days become evil, the famine rages, the adventurer is literally famishing, he is on the verge of starvation. With very gentle strokes he sketches the hunger which illustrates the ordinary hunger of the "down and out." The hungry beggar stands before the rich landowner, even in the dearth still satiated; before the settled citizen is the foreign vagabond, and to this citizen he "attaches" himself as a parasite—the blunt expression *ekollēthē* permits this comparison. Moreover, the bluntness of that which follows is not without artistic purpose; the citizen sends him to the fields to tend swine, "and he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him."

That is as grotesque a picture of famine as can be shown. Those on the verge of starvation are not concerned any more with eating, but with



the stilling of an animal desire. It is certainly not without purpose that the contrast is so expressed that where the hunger of men is degraded to the animal level it is said of swine that they "ate as men."

Then again the narrator continues with concise brevity: "When he came to himself." "To himself" means in his inner soul. And here he finds again something which he had lost—his "I." In Greek the first personal pronoun is usually expressed in the verb form; only when it is strongly emphasized is the word "I" separately expressed; thus here, "But I, I am here perishing with hunger."

It is again one of the niceties of the account that the hungry man who comes to himself thinks first not of his sin but of the bread that is at his father's house; only later of his sin. The devotional writer would probably first have had him express a long confession of sin. The keen observer of human nature has him first speak of bread, and only when the bread of the homeland had satisfied his tortured body, of that which concerned his soul. "I will arise and go unto my father, and say unto him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee. . . ."

This *Pater peccavi* finds a moving illustration in a *Mater peccavi* which pierces to our heart over the centuries from the soul of another prodigal son. We read it on the torn sheet of a papyrus letter of the second century A. D. discovered in Egypt and now to be found in the Berlin Museum. This human document<sup>1</sup> is an exact parallel to our parable. I translate it as follows:

Antonius Longus to Nilus his mother many greetings. And continually do I pray that thou art in health. I make intercession for thee day by day to the lord Serapis. I would thou shouldst understand that I had no hope that thou wouldst go up to the metropolis. And therefore I came not to the city. But I was ashamed to come to Caranis, because I walk about in rags. I write to thee that I am naked. I beseech thee, mother, be reconciled to me. Furthermore, I know what I have brought upon myself. I have been chastened even as is meet. I know that I have sinned. I have heard from Posthumus, who met thee in the country about Arsinoe and out of season told thee all things. Knowest thou not that I had rather be maimed than know that I still owe a man an obol? . . . come thyself! . . . I have heard that. . . . I beseech thee. . . . I almost. . . . I beseech thee. . . . I will . . . not . . . do otherwise.

Here the papyrus breaks off. On the back is the address: (....) his mother, from Antonius Longus her son.

The value of this ancient sheet is considerable, and just because it is

<sup>1</sup>I have published it with facsimile, translation, and commentary in my book, *Light from the Ancient East*, new and completely revised edition, New York (George H. Doran Company), 1927, p. 187ff.

an entirely unliterary letter it reflects a real human destiny with genuine fidelity. We also have ancient confessions of sin in correct literary style, such as this:<sup>2</sup>

I know that I erred in that I treated thee ill. Wherefore, having repented, I beg pardon for the error. But for the Lord's sake delay not to forgive me, For it is just to pardon friends who stumble, and especially when they desire to obtain pardon.

But no one will fail to appreciate that in the letter of Antonius Longus real life vibrates with more naïve strength.

Just because of its unliterary, naïve, and natural character, the letter of Antonius Longus is an excellent illustration to the parable of the prodigal son. Not from artificial reflection but from life itself it gives a contribution to the understanding of the human destiny that Jesus has drawn from life. Furthermore, when Jesus unfolded this human destiny he was unliterary; he never imagined that there would come a time when men of the study-chamber, bowed over this passage, would be interested in its form of expression and content, or that the story told under the sky of the Holy Land on the road to Jerusalem in a few minutes would call forth a whole library of expositions.

It is fortunate also that the letter of Antonius Longus has not been handed down through literary channels, but accidentally came to light in our own day from the Egyptian soil. If it had been a literary document then there would not fail to be in our libraries essays to prove either that Jesus was dependent on the Antonius letter, or that the man whom we call Jesus was not a man of flesh and blood, but that there was an active, anonymous community of sponges, of unknown time and place, who cut out and pasted together a new religion with shears and paste from the shreds and shavings of Judaism, Hellenism, and other isms.

The rest follows in rapid succession. The father discovers the returning wanderer and is beside himself for joy. Again the knowing interruption, "How did the father know that his son was coming?" Jesus would silence, perhaps with the word, "Be still! Just see how the old man rejoices!" That is described in detail, but not even here sentimentally; in detail, because here lies the point of the parable: the boundless joy of the father at the return of his son is the *tertium comparationis* to which we must pay attention.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 192.

An explanation is not necessary; everything speaks for itself. I will call attention to only three points:

The father does not permit his son to finish speaking; he spares him the word about the hired laborers.

The father simply cannot think of enough to do: "and, and, and . . ." One must read quickly as in excited, joyous activity.

The father gives away in his joy the best that is possible for him. Luther translated here, "a" fatted calf, while in the original it read, "the" fatted calf.<sup>3</sup> This animal was the pride of the household; everyone knows this one calf, the slave and afterward also the elder brother, who finds it unheard of that the father could act so. This touch especially shows the entirely popular plastic art of the story; nothing could have better illustrated the joy of the father for the popular feeling than this feature;<sup>4</sup> everyone who has grown up in the country will confirm this.

The scene with the elder brother at the end is clear in itself; the correct, the righteous, the self-righteous one grumbles at the excessive kindness; he naturally knows more of the dissolute life of the brother than had been previously indicated, and speaks pharisaically of the brother's intercourse with harlots; yet the father reproves him with a restrained, fatherly self-possession that is to be disturbed by nothing. Then the story ends. The dilettante would have added a further conclusion; the master stops where he is sure of his effect.

What task do the interpreters face? It is simple enough: they should not expound, but ascertain the one main thought. This is at the same time simple and profound. A father rejoices more over the return of his ruined, lost son, than over the daily propriety of the righteous son who remained at home. So, moreover, God will feel boundless joy over the conversion of every sinner. This application was already anticipated in the parallel parables of Luke 15. 7 and 10.

The scene with the elder brother could be spared and then the parable of the prodigal son would be the exact parallel to the parable of the lost sheep and the lost coin. But the scene is added in order to justify the paradoxical force of the answer to the fault-finding objections of pharisaic self-righteousness.

The parable of the prodigal son is the summing up of all the evangel-

<sup>3</sup> As in the English Bible.

<sup>4</sup> This little feature is very well preserved in the translation by Edgar I. Goodspeed, "for him the calf we are fattening"; similarly in verses 27 and 30.

ical avowals of Jesus concerning the nature and character of his Heavenly Father, and concerning the value and effect of our conversion. It has been rightly called, "the gospel within the gospel;" it will always be the *magna charta* of all poor sinners.

Whoever reads once more the story will perhaps be able to offer a contribution to the question as to the aim of the parable: did Jesus want to harden, or did he want to help those who were impenitent? This question can be answered here by experiment. Is there a passage anywhere in the world which is so well adapted as this to reform an impenitent man, a passage under which we could write with more justice the words of the German poet who was such a keen interpreter of the human heart,<sup>5</sup>

"In the sinner repentant the Godhead feels joy;  
Immortals delight thus their might to employ,  
Lost children to raise to a heavenly place."

But just as great as the religious significance and effect of our parable is its historical significance for the understanding of the inner life of Jesus himself. It is not a document of dead teaching, which is passed on. Looking through the parable we see into the depths of the soul of the narrator himself; we see a prophetic figure of conflict whose superior irony prostrates the fault-finding self-righteousness of the Pharisees; we see a truly divine, brotherly condescension to the lost, and we would be able to understand from this parable alone why the men of the first century, hungering for salvation, were so captivated by the personality of this Jesus, exalted to be an object of worship, that they arose and fled from the old divinities of the East and the West to his presence.

<sup>5</sup> Goethe.

# The Need of a Civic Conscience

WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE

**W**E Americans like to believe that we are a good people because we admit that we ought to be. We think that of course we have a civic conscience. We know the difference between right and wrong in our public affairs, and we want things to be right. So we tell ourselves with the comfortableness of an easy virtue. But, as a matter of fact, against our bland assumption that we want things to be right stands the unpleasant fact that very often they are wrong. Inefficiency and corruption in our public life go on existing. Sometimes we forget about these. Sometimes we pretend not to notice. But now and then, to our possible benefit, there comes some new searchlight on old facts which makes us perceive the realities with which we are confronted and compels us to determine whether we really have a conscience or only an unlimited complacency.

That aspect of public affairs which touches an increasing multitude of people most nearly is the administration of our cities. In the main, our cities are singularly alike. Political machines may have one name in this place and another name in that, but essentially the things they do and the problems they present are similar. Consequently, it is not a matter of merely local interest to consider what may be revealed in one particular place. A study into the civic conditions of one city will interpret much concerning cities and towns from one side of this country to another. Wherever the lid may be lifted, the same general brew is found in the civic kettle. Attention might happen to focus upon Chicago or upon Philadelphia or Pittsburgh—or upon Cross-Roads City, if there chanced to be one. As a matter of fact, the spotlight is at this moment upon New York; and those who choose to consider what it reveals will become better acquainted with realities which are local in their name but exceedingly general in their nature.

The investigation into the political conditions of New York City which is at present being conducted was inaugurated more than a year ago by the Legislature of New York State. The report of its findings has commanded first-page publicity in the metropolitan newspapers, has caught the attention of students of government everywhere, and, on account of its political implications in this presidential year—if for no better reason—has a chance of carrying its conclusions far and wide to many who ordinarily might shrug their shoulders and say that they “are not interested in such matters.”

In order to set the scene for the discussion and to make clear the personalities who appear, it is worth while to state with some particularity ex-

actly how and by whom the present investigation is being carried on. The Legislature appointed as the investigators a committee drawn from its own membership, made up of five members of the majority party, Republicans, and two of the minority, Democrats; plus three other Republicans as *ex officio* members and two other Democrats, *ex officio*. The chairman of the investigating committee is Senator Samuel H. Hofstadter. The committee appointed as its counsel the Hon. Samuel Seabury, a member of the New York Bar and former Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York. The fact that the counsel is spoken of as Judge Seabury has doubtless been confusing to many readers of the reports in which his name figures so prominently. In this investigation his capacity is not a judicial one. He is the lawyer engaged by the committee to investigate facts, assemble material, summon witnesses, and in general assume the duty of presenting before the committee the picture of political conditions in New York from which the committee may draw its conclusions and on the basis of which its members may present their ultimate report to the Legislature of the state.

Naturally the cry of partisan politics has been raised. The Legislature is controlled in both its branches by the Republicans. The administration of New York City is in the hands of Democrats. Obviously, therefore, there are political motives which would make a Republican-controlled committee not averse to discovering conditions in New York which could be used to the disadvantage of their opponents. Foreseeing that criticism, the committee selected as its counsel, not a Republican, but Judge Seabury, who is a Democrat. He is, however, an anti-Tammany Democrat, and Tammany Hall, therefore, has been both prompt and vehement in its cry that the work of the committee is merely "persecution." In fact, the leader of Tammany Hall, Mr. John F. Curry, when testifying before the committee concerning certain matters in which his influence had appeared, with a pious fervor which outran the bounds of common language, protested the "crucifixion" of Tammany.

Facts, however, are stubborn things. They have a way of emerging above the smoke-screen of partisan recrimination and debate. And among the facts thus emerging in New York are these.

City officials have been shown to have accumulated extraordinarily large bank accounts, as to the sources of which Judge Seabury evinced an inconvenient curiosity. The explanations given by these officials, when put upon the witness stand before the investigating committee, were, to say the least, unusual. Mr. James A. McQuade, on a salary ranging from \$9,000 to \$12,000, banked \$510,597 in six years. Upon the witness stand he an-



nounced that the way in which he had accumulated this money was through borrowing in order to take care of himself and thirty-three other McQuades who were dependent upon his bounty. When asked to indicate those from whom he had borrowed such ample sums, he said that he could not remember. Sheriff Thomas M. Farley, of New York County, on a salary ranging from \$6,500 to \$15,000, banked \$360,660 in six years and explained that his bank deposits came out of a "wonderful tin box" which he kept at home and which nearly always seemed to have something in it when he went there. Sheriff Farley was one of the district leaders of the Tammany organization in New York City, and the district club of which he was the head was raided by the police as being the resort of professional gamblers in 1926, after the club had been equipped with bars and screens at the windows and with an "icebox door" with a peep-hole at its entrance. Not on the basis of this latter charge, since it happened before Farley's election as sheriff, but on the basis of his unexplained bank accounts, Farley, upon charges presented by Judge Seabury, has recently been removed from his office by the Governor of the state. Others, however, who have managed to make their office not less lucrative, are still in the picture, among them James J. McCormick, Tammany leader of the Twenty-second Assembly District, Manhattan, who, as a deputy city clerk, in a period of ten and a half years, when his salary ranged from \$5,000 to \$8,500 a year, and when, according to his testimony, he had no other gainful occupation and not more than \$5,000 or \$6,000 a year of additional income of his own, deposited in his bank account \$384,788. Charles W. Culkin, former sheriff and Tammany leader of the Third Assembly District, Manhattan, was associated with James M. McCunn, a notorious liquor dealer, in the Monroe Lamp and Equipment Company, which appeared to have used the political influence of Mr. Culkin in securing favors for customers so successfully that between 1925 and the end of 1931 Mr. Culkin deposited in his personal bank account \$1,929,759.35. In his "Intermediate Report" to the Legislative Committee, published on January 25, 1932, Judge Seabury, after listing the political connections of Culkin's company, summarized the results as follows: "The evidence establishes that the Monroe Company, unable to offer any inducements to customers from the standpoint of price, sought and obtained a large volume of business in return for assurances, given sometimes by salesmen and in some instances by Culkin himself, that they would procure the removal of violations which might be filed by any of the departments of the City of New York, particularly the fire department, against the buildings occupied by customers of the Monroe Company."

Where did the money come from which these and similar persons in the city administration have been drawing to themselves? In some instances from petty grafting. In a case such as that of Deputy Clerk McCormick, from illegal fees exacted or cajoled from ignorant people of small means who came to his bureau for marriage licenses. In some instances, such as those of Farley and Culkin, the money seemed to trace back to the underworld of bootlegging and of gambling. But this was not the whole picture. A more important element was the glimpses here and there afforded into a system under which big business had to pay tribute to the political organization, even to get legitimate permits and licenses, and under which other agencies of big business set out to buy political favors to which they had no title except what their money could create.

As an example of this first sort of dealing stands the story of the effort of the North German Lloyd Steamship Company to secure from the city the right to lease a pier through the Dock Commissioner of the City of New York in order that its transatlantic liners might dock in Manhattan. The company was ready to pay the rent which the city asked for the pier lease; but it was unable to get any action on its application. Finally the North German Lloyd Company was advised to employ the services of one William H. Hickin, a lawyer with powerful political connections in the Tammany organization. A \$50,000 "fee" was paid to Hickin, and in his report to the Legislative Committee Judge Seabury summed up the record as follows: "The foregoing review of the North German Lloyd pier lease transaction shows too eloquently to require further discussion how arrangements for the granting of pier leases in the City of New York are made directly with Tammany Hall. It is also evidence of the subtle system by which graft is now extorted—to wit, the interposition of a lawyer to whom the money is passed under the guise of a legal fee."

This was an instance in which a great corporation seeking to carry through what was in itself a legitimate transaction with the city found itself obliged to pay political blackmail. Other instances which have been brought to light before the Legislative Committee show the connection between business and politics in instances where business has been not the passive but the active agent in the questionable alliance.

The most conspicuous revelation of this centers around the figure of John A. Hastings, member of the Senate in the New York Legislature, personal friend of the Mayor of New York, and described by Judge Seabury as the "bought and paid agent" of business interests seeking favors from the city. Hastings was the go-between in a lengthy effort made by a group

of men who wanted to sell buses for new transportation lines on the streets of New York City and a rubber company which was going to sell tires to the buses. Through the efforts of the Mayor of the city, a franchise was awarded to the Equitable Coach Company, which Hastings was representing; though, as a matter of fact, on account of inability to secure financial backing, the Equitable Company could not use its franchise. Hastings was also representative of taxicab companies interested in the Board of Taxicab Control, under which these companies hoped to secure a monopoly of the taxicab operation on the streets of New York. The testimony before the Legislative Committee shows that since his friend Mayor Walker took office in 1926, Senator Hastings received more than \$125,000 from the proceeds of the bus and taxicab companies whose interests he was assiduously advancing. Moreover, as these words are written, an explanation is still to be forthcoming of bonds to the amount of \$26,500 given to the Mayor himself in 1929 by a stockbroker who represented one of the taxicab companies seeking more advantageous opportunity in New York. Other evidence which the counsel of the investigating committee has desired to lay before it has up to this time been blocked by the suggestive fact that many witnesses believed to be able to throw light upon the relationship between the city government and various business interests seeking special favors have disappeared. The Chief Engineer of the Dock Department committed suicide after he had admitted splitting fees and after it was disclosed that he had large bank accounts. The Engineering Inspector of the Manhattan Bureau of Buildings left a \$35,000 home after it was discovered that he had a \$150,000 bank account, and has not been heard from since. Russell T. Sherwood, business representative of Mayor Walker, after having gone to Mexico last year on a wedding trip, disappeared, and all the efforts of Judge Seabury's agents have been unable to find him; and this notwithstanding the fact that through his disappearance he has suffered a \$50,000 fine for contempt of court. Senator Hastings carried through all the courts of New York State up to the highest his effort to avoid being summoned as a witness before the committee.

Meanwhile, to quote the indignant words of Judge Seabury, embodied in his report to the Legislative Committee already twice referred to:

"From the start Tammany Hall has done everything within its power to obstruct and interfere with the exposure of the conditions brought out in the testimony. There can be no question about the participation of Tammany Hall in the legal proceedings which have been taken in the attempt of some of the witnesses to avoid interrogation. . . . Not a single one of the

miscreants has been repudiated by Tammany Hall, or even criticized by it, for the official wrongdoing which has been shown; on the contrary, Tammany Hall has taken these wrongdoers to its bosom, has lent them all the aid and comfort that it could and has acted as their protector and adviser throughout. It is perfectly apparent that what these men did is part of the system upon which Tammany Hall exists and expands; that Tammany Hall approves it and is ready to extend its arm to the utmost to protect and perpetuate its sordid traffic in political influence."

Such is a brief sketch of some of the facts revealed or suggested in the investigation of one municipality. What now is the public conscience to do with these?

In the first place, it may seek a scapegoat, and with pious indignation lay all its sins upon the back of that scapegoat if he is labeled and if he happens to be sufficiently prominent. In the New York investigation Hastings happens to be one such scapegoat. Concerning him at first there was a general public interest and curiosity. Why was he trying to avoid appearance before the investigating committee? Would he succeed with his manipulation of legal technicalities and his appeals from court to court so that he could avoid appearance as a witness? He had asserted that "if need be, my attorneys will be instructed to make so many motions and counter-motions to that end that somebody soon will have Saint Vitus dance." The public mind, however, is not having Saint Vitus dance with regard to this man. On the contrary, it is becoming increasingly poised and definite. It looks at this person with his good clothes and his bad manners and sees in him a possible villain for the melodrama. He has received large sums of money, some of it as salary and some of it as "loans" which he never took the trouble to pay back, in order to push the secret schemes of men who were trying to work the city government for their own advantage. "If a man like that were sent to prison, perhaps the politicians and the political go-betweens would learn a lesson," says the man in the street, who is growing sick of Hastings and his type. And what of Mayor Walker? There would be the most dramatic scapegoat of all. Suppose Judge Seabury should succeed in involving him in the same questionable deals which Hastings was so well paid for trying to engineer. Suppose charges should be framed against the Mayor so grave and so inescapable that the Governor would be forced to take action, as he had to do in the case of Sheriff Farley, and remove him from his office as Mayor of New York. Then many persons might suppose that the investigation had been a success. An unfit public

official would have been discredited and disposed of; and by reason of that the city government in New York, and perhaps by indirect influence in other cities, would henceforth be better.

But only a very shallow-thinking and credulous person would really believe that. We could not get rid of our difficulties so easily. No, not on the back of even the most interesting and conspicuous scapegoat. Behind any individual in our political affairs there stands a more potent thing. There stands the organization.

In New York the organization happens to be Tammany Hall. The name matters little. The political affiliation also matters little. In one place the machine is Democratic. In another it is Republican. Whichever it is, the political machine is bent upon the same practical ends. When it tells the unvarnished truth, it says exactly what Mr. Croker, former leader of Tammany Hall, once said about himself: "I work for my own pocket all the time." In that sentence, as applied to the political machine, there is not one statement but two. The machine works for its own pocket, and it works not merely on election days and on particular occasions and now and then, but all the time.

And yet the matter is not as simple even as that. The political organizations which dominate our cities are greedy and unscrupulous. And that is bad. But no one of these organizations is altogether bad. That is the worst of it! They would be so much easier to dispose of if they were bad clear through. But they have a way of utilizing much that is best in our human nature at the same time when they are profitably manipulating the worst. An organization like Tammany Hall keeps its hold upon the people because after its manner it is good to the people. In the long run, of course, it takes away from the common man more than it gives him. But the common man does not know that. He only knows that the organization gives him something when he needs it and gives it to him with a genial interest which makes him think that he knows who his friends are. The ward leader is responsible for his people and responsible for keeping them loyal all the time. He gets a job for the man who is out of work. He may be able to lift the deserving voter and vote-getter to a position on the city pay-roll. His word will smooth the way for special favors in the city hospitals. In times of stress he may pay rent for the family which is about to be evicted, or settle the over-due bill at the grocer's. A man like Sheriff Farley is popular with his neighbors. The rank and file did not bother themselves much with questions as to where he got his money. They only considered that he seemed to have a large heart and a generous hand, that he befriended poor



people, and every summer took three thousand children off on a picnic. An organization cemented by ties like those will not be dealt with by any spasmodic agencies of reform.

Therefore our civic conscience, assuming that we have it, will not accomplish much by driving a scapegoat or two into the wilderness or even by upsetting, in occasional moments of reform, the established dominance of the political machine. William L. Strong was elected Mayor of New York to be the good business man who would purify bad politics; but after one term he went out and Tammany came back in. Seth Low was elected; but presently back came Tammany. John Purroy Mitchel brought in one more reform administration; but after one term in office, he too was rejected and Tammany came back, and for four mayoralty terms has been back, to its old control.

What is it now that makes the city political machine bad, and what is it that makes its badness so hard to get rid of? One of its strengths, as we have already suggested, is its cultivation of the loyalty of the little man. But how is it able to cultivate his loyalty? It does it by handing him out favors made possible ultimately by its consolidated power and its accumulated funds. And what consolidates its power and what enriches its funds? One thing. Its alliance with favor-seeking business.

One of the most illuminating books in our generation is *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*. Mr. Steffens has known as much as any man in America of our municipalities and their political machines. It was he who secured the material for the famous series of articles on "The Shame of the Cities," which ran in *McClure's Magazine* early in this century. He had intimate knowledge, as a newspaper reporter and editor, of New York. He set out to gain an equally intimate knowledge of other American cities—Chicago, Minneapolis, Saint Louis, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and others. And he found them all alike. All of them were subject to the same sort of political manipulation and corruption, and the reason everywhere was the same. The reason was that business interests wanted special favors and were prepared to buy them. Theoretically they might talk of wanting pure politics; but what they really wanted was politics which could be used for profit. They wanted protection from factory acts or industrial regulations which happened to be expensive. They wanted civic contracts and city money on deposit in their banks. They wanted franchises, and they would pay to get them. The political conditions might be corrupt, but they were convenient. Too much criticism might hurt a city's credit. It was a good thing to have an administration which business could use, even if it was "bad."



That is what Steffens brings out in his extraordinary book. That is the picture which he forces us to see in the American cities of yesterday and compels us to recognize again in the American cities of to-day. The lines of that picture have been etched anew in the investigation which Judge Seabury is conducting in New York now. The reason why New York has to-day an administration which is cynically indifferent to the public interest, the reason why there are scores of officials who have been using their offices as opportunities for graft, and the reason why the interests of the ordinary citizens and taxpayers have been sacrificed in secret deals which gave franchises and other wealth which belonged to the city to people who exploited these for themselves, is not because the dominant political organization is made up of men so able and so powerful that they dare to be regardless of what the city wants. It is because they represent what exceedingly strong financial and business interests do want. The disreputable politician is the product of the respectable business man who does not carry his private conscience too far into practical matters and who wants the kind of politician who is willing to be used.

Lincoln Steffens tells what he learned once from Tom Johnson, Mayor of Cleveland, who, after he had been a street-railway magnate, using politics for his own interests, changed his mind and his motive, and having sold out his monopoly, went into politics as a successful business man with a vision and a plan. "You did not see what it was that corrupted politics," he said to Steffens. "First you thought it was bad politicians, who turned out to be pretty good fellows. Then you blamed the bad business men who bribed the good fellows, till you discovered that not all business men bribed and that those who did were pretty good business men. The little business men didn't bribe; so you settled upon, you invented, the phrase 'big business,' and that's as far as you and your kind have got: that it is big business that does all the harm. Can't you see that it is privileged business that does it? Whether it's a big steam railroad that wants a franchise or a little gambling-house that wants not to be raided, a temperance society that wants a law passed, a poor little prostitute, or a big merchant occupying an alley for storage—it's those who seek privileges who corrupt, it's those who possess privileges that defend our corrupt politics. Can't you see that?"

Thus it appears that "The Need of a Civic Conscience," which is the title of this article, is a more exacting matter than at first may have appeared.

We cannot have a conscience unless we care. A conscience does not mean a tepid theoretical recognition that there is a difference between right

and wrong. It does not mean pious talk and idle whining against corrupt conditions by men and women who have been too lazy even to try to make them other than they are. Some aspects of caring are obvious enough. To care about clean politics means at least that people will take the trouble to register and to vote, not only when this is convenient, but when it is inconvenient, not only when the issues are interesting, but in those "off years," when the professional politician entrenches himself in power. It means the willingness of people to identify themselves with the community in which they are living instead of fastening themselves upon its life like parasites who take what they want out of it and give no conscientious citizenship back. One of the great evils of our modern civilization lies in our migratory population—in people, especially in the greater cities, who rent an apartment somewhere this year and think they may be somewhere else twelve months from now, and therefore do not try to associate themselves as voting citizens with the place in which they are. Occasionally this forfeiting of citizenship is unavoidable. More often it is due to a shallow thoughtlessness which needs the power of public opinion to bring it to its senses. When people who recognize their civic responsibilities bring the pressure of more drastic social judgment upon those who do not, so that to ignore one's duty as a citizen becomes a recognized reproach, then we shall begin at least to have the elements out of which an effective conscience may be shaped.

But not only must we care. We must also know. Conscience to be effective must be intelligent. We shall never accomplish much merely by making individual scapegoats. We shall never accomplish much by fitful movements of reform which have no deeper conception than merely to "turn the rascals out." There is need to study thoroughly those things in which the strength of crooked politics consists. One of the disappointing features of such an investigation as that now being pursued in New York is the absence from the hearings of the investigating committee of the sort of men who ought to be there to learn at first hand what that investigation reveals. If some sensational charge against an individual is suggested, people will read about it next morning in their newspapers; but all too few will follow the day-by-day disclosures of those connections between politics and the favor-seeking interests by which, rather than by any few bad leaders, the power of the political machine is maintained.

And this leads us to the last consideration, which cannot be developed in any single magazine article but which goes deep and reaches far into all our thinking about what we call our practical affairs. In our present "acquisitive society" we consider that a man has a right to make as much

money as he can—so long as he makes it honestly. But what is “honestly”? If a man owns a tract of land and discovers an oil-well on it, we say that all that oil is honestly his, though he did not create a drop of it. If a man inherits a plot of land on the outskirts of a city, and if then the growth of the city, through pressure of the population and its increasing needs, enormously enhances the value of this land which he has held, we say that all that unearned increment is honestly his, though he has done nothing whatever but sit still. If a manufacturer, or a whole group of manufacturers, can persuade Congress to enact a tariff law which will protect their product at the expense of the consuming public, those particular manufacturers are not demoted from the class of honest men. Within certain rules of the game, it is recognized that men have a right to make as much money as their skill and their luck permit. Our conception of business is not organized primarily in terms of public welfare, but of private advantage. Between these accepted principles of “honest” business and the ways of dishonest politics, there is not so vast a gulf as we should prefer to suppose. The “dishonest” politician has his own standards of honesty also. He will play straight with his own crowd. When he gives his word, he can be depended upon to carry out his promise. But if in the granting of franchises and the manipulation of other city business he “gets something on the side,” is he doing anything so acutely different from what is done every day in the general society of which he is part?

In other words, we are not likely to get much better politics until we have set up more drastic standards of public accountability not only for the politicians but for ourselves. The condemnation and removal from office of individuals who have been particularly cynical of the public welfare may do some good. Simpler forms of municipal government like that secured by Cincinnati in its recent charter change may enable the electorate to understand their municipal affairs more intelligently and to hold their elected officials more directly responsible to the people’s will. But these and similar matters are of only partial consequence. The real question we have to ask ourselves in America is more drastic. Do we want a change in our standards of success and in our controlling sanctions which will supplant our present instinctive acceptance of unlimited private profit with a new conception that public welfare all along the line is more important than private gain? Once we attain to that new conscience, our economic activities and all the field of men’s everyday ambitions may be transformed. And until we do attain to that, there is no great reason for expecting in politics an unrelated transformation.

# The Culture and Discipline of the Soul

ALFRED E. WHITHAM

**B**EYOND question in these days there is a widespread neglect and, in some quarters, dislike of the subject and experiences of the devout life, and here and there, without and within the churches, a defiant, impatient opposition to its claims or imposition. I fear as a minister to put the plain question to many of my own members concerning their prayer life, and the time they give to such disciplines and exercises. When I am bold enough to do so I receive sorry admissions that prayer as a definite intelligent methodical practice is almost entirely neglected. Some will admit the neglect with shame, others with a boast that they have little room for methodical and lengthy prayer, and judge you odd, even suspect in your emphasis of its need. Some few have answered with pathetic tone, "You are always telling us to pray more, but you never tell us how."

I have joined in many retreats for ministers and the confessions of some evoked in the intimacies of such gatherings have been astonishing. Sustained disciplined prayer has had little or no place in their life for years past. I was with a group of Scots recently and as we came out of a small chapel attached to the house where we met I remarked on the usefulness of such a place, where one might retire at the close of the day, or turn in at the opening of the day, to say one's prayers. "Yes," said a minister, "if you care for that sort of thing, and the practice of the devout life appeals to you." One would have gathered from the tone and word that we were discussing an acquired taste such as a taste for tomatoes.

It is hardly necessary for me to point out that the experts in the spiritual life have been men and women of prayer, of continuous prayer. Jeremy Taylor poured out ejaculatory prayer at the striking of the hours. John Wesley through a large part of his life prayed for five minutes every hour. De Foucauld, that intrepid saint of Morocco, prayed and interceded for the Mohammedan people round about him for eight and nine hours a day. Jane Stoddart, of *British Weekly* fame, in that catholic hearted and most popularly written book on *Prayer*, has gathered overwhelming evidence on this fact.

But in these hurried, bustling, practical days we will do almost anything save pray, and few people know how to make a five minutes' "recollection." Men are loyal to churches and to ministers, to flags and causes, they will serve tables with good will and with touching devotion to duty, they will attend committees and discuss business of the church at cost of

thought and time. They love to be doing things, while the habit of communion with God in definite prayer, in prayer made rich with adoration, thanksgiving, confession, petition, and intercession, with searching examination of motive, of defects in character and conduct, is intermittent at the best and generally neglected. Never was the problem of life more confused and involved, never was life so distracting, never such temptation to a life on the horizontal without vertical lift, never were temporal influences so deeply insinuating and standing so thick around, never has the weary heart, the nervous system, the distracted mind and disabled will needed so much the quiet hills of prayer, and the strength of those hills, and perhaps never have they been less visited. This state of things makes the preaching and teaching task of the church very heavy. To restate its truth in modern terms without betraying any essential of that truth, to keep in closest touch with the accredited findings of other branches of knowledge, yet maintain its own authoritative word, to proclaim the gospel and apply its ethic amid so much contrary teaching, against economic and social pressures and resistances, is surely the most formidable task ever set the church. We cannot expect the average pulpit, or indeed any pulpit, within the limits of a sermon to correlate our increasing knowledge or attract men by the satisfactory, the fresh and convincing answer to a fraction of the modern questions. Our strongest appeal, therefore, not of course neglecting any intellectual duty within our powers, is to be found in our mystic answers, our intuitions rather than our discursive reasoning, in those influences that radiate from utterly good and truly devout souls, who betray by the serenity of their faces and the power of their lives an unearthly presence and grace, and these things come by prayer, and we would add by fasting, in other words by a discipline and culture of the interior life. It is a disquieting reflection that when this quiet mystic answer is most desperately needed, "busyness," excessive activism, is the mark of the church.

The hindrances to deliberate intelligent prayer life and the culture of the soul are many. There is first bodily sloth that dislikes troubling itself, an initial difficulty in starting, as we defer writing a letter, or getting out of bed on a winter morning. There is also a mental sloth that refuses to concentrate in prayer though prepared for every other mental activity. Causade writes, "There is nothing more sublime than contemplation as we find it in books, nothing more beautiful or grander than passive prayer in theory, but in practice nothing more humiliating, more crucifying." This is not a very encouraging word to start with. Then there is a fascination in activity, in just doing things. Our conscience so easily supports us in work, there is



such an easy exit that way from many unpleasant recollections and interior glances. Finally there is the aridity of our prayers, perhaps the strongest reason for our impatience with and reluctance to explore that way. I think ministers have an additional enemy of the interior life. It is so difficult for us to open the Bible or any devotional manual without thinking of sermons, particularly the next one so soon to be delivered. It is so hard to make a meditation, to track a motive, to spot a defect new to our consciousness without making a note of it as useful in exhorting, in other words without seeing even in our prayer life matter for preaching. So we mistake study for prayer, and musing for meditation. I believe Doctor Horton to avoid this always kept a Bible specially for his private devotion and refused to make a sermon mark or reference on its pages.

There are other objections to all this emphasis of the devout life and disciplined prayer that must be noted. Disciplined prayer has been practiced by Catholics largely; for one Protestant book on the subject there are twenty or more produced by Catholics. I first realized this many years ago when Dr. John Hutton advised me to read Faber's *Spiritual Conferences*, a third of which is not very helpful, two thirds not of immense use, but including chapters on Kindness and Self-deception, which are pure gold. The question I asked myself as a Methodist was "Why have not the Methodists with their class-meeting experience produced this kind of literature in abundance?" I could think of little done on the subject by them, though they ought by their tradition and habit to be masters of the psychology of the soul. I put down the neglect partly to a prejudice against Catholic ways, and partly to an unconscious fear of where that road might lead in rebuke and judgment. I am sure for many in these days the Catholic smack and ring in all this sort of habit, the fact that it opposes our Protestant prejudices and tastes, not to say principles, cuts us off from undoubted benefits, and we are denied the green pastures and still waters of the ways of prayer. There is a fear also lest the means become the end, and we have abundant reason in the history of the churches for this fear. Then the devout school has not always been attractive, ethically or temperamentally. Very objectionable defects in character have gone unrebuked and uncorrected through years of punctual attendance at communion and the rest. Many devotees have remained blind to the needs of others, to the social wrongs of their times. Hammond's books on the village and town laborer bring this out with humiliating clearness. There is described the beginnings of our industrial revolution, the development of our vast inhuman machinery, the outrage done to justice and humanity, and the evangelical revival,



at its height through the period, allowed all manner of infamous things to take root with little or no protest or concern. This, of course, is an indictment brought against the whole evangelical school, but it has direct bearing upon our larger subject. So many have, therefore, swung to the opposite extreme and let the interior life look after itself in their more "practical Christianity." In reply to that criticism it is at least significant that in the present day in the Church of England the devout party are the most interested in social questions to the great annoyance in certain socialistic tendencies of Dean Inge and the irritation of political leaders. In the General Strike it was the High Church party that made the move toward a reconciliation of the contending parties.

Further, many judge prayer by its practical effects as a means to an end, which is quite right, only the mistake has been of demanding too instantaneous a result, and of placing the end to be aimed at far too low, oftentimes merely pleasant character or energetic social service. But the neglect is starving a side of our nature, and sooner or later that neglect will take revenge in extravagant indulgence. Here I think is the main cause for such increase as is announced of Roman converts from the free churches and the vitality of the High Church party in the Church of England. Canon Quick, writing of the popularity of the doctrine of the Real Presence in the sacrament and the adoration before the tabernacle of the reserved host, shows why the demand is making itself felt. "The discovery of modern science may seem to have removed God further off from the touch of human need than ever did theologies influenced by feudalism. But the love of Jesus, concrete and personal, still shines from the gospel pages into the human heart, and the faith of many is ready to turn its back on the dark riddles of metaphysical theology if its devotion can be offered an outward and definite point of contact with him whose presence it seeks." The sooner we realize the distinction between the ecclesiastical pretensions of Rome, the politics of the Vatican, the methods Rome adopts and will adopt for the subjection of her children to the faith and to her rule, and on the other side the devotional values of many of the things pitched out when the Pope was dismissed, the better for our devout life and the exercise of our souls in communion with God. If the free churches cannot incorporate that good in their own practices our devout life is doomed, and there will be a survival of the fittest and Rome will have it, for the thirst in many is strong for those devotions Rome supplies, so strong that men will drink from brackish waters to quench the thirst.

But to return to our line. What is the end and aim of prayer? One

might reply, nearness to God. But that needs explication. Might we not say likeness to God should be the end of prayer? "Not if the suggestion is that likeness could be attained or would content the soul apart from nearness to him. God often grants the soul a sense of his nearness long before it has attained any likeness to him, of course only so that it should become more swiftly and perfectly like him." The primary end of prayer should therefore be to realize God's nearness and to feel it there and then, which is called the experimental knowledge of God, presuming of course that this knowledge is built upon faith that he is always near and that it is the soul and not the senses that will register the fact. "But the feeling of his nearness must be sought solely that we may become like him while in turn likeness to his will is sought solely that we may dwell near him, for the soul craves the companionship of God, that vision, communion, and union with him for which it was created, which vision would involve our destruction unless we were like him."

Let us now look at the accredited route as witnessed in the history of the prayer life. The first and most elementary stage of prayer is vocal prayer, ejaculatory, broken repeatings such as "God have mercy on us," "Lord save us," the use of the Lord's Prayer, the Gloria, passages from the Psalms, that treasury for prayer, familiar prayers of the saints, or liturgical prayer. This is only the beginning but a good beginning for the soul that offers these repetitions with sincere and devout attention. But prayer must soon develop into what we might call conversation with God, sometimes with words, very often only in the mind, a way which is described as "colloquy." But then comes the stage when we want to think before we begin to pray, to arrange our thoughts, to tabulate our requests before we make them, to revise them before we offer them as petitions, and that is called "meditation" or mental prayer.

The next stage passes beyond considerations, beyond discursive words and reasoning though such are not entirely absent, when intuitions rather than arguments are present, when the heart and mind are simplified and the dominant thought returns frequently and of its own accord. Deeper than thought, as thought is deeper than speech, is desire, and the desire for God can never wholly be expressed nor need it be. So prayer passes into the inward presentation to God of a silent inexpressible, though sometimes vehemently painful, desire which is only quieted when it is answered by a sense of his nearness, and the soul perceiving itself loved and loving in turn lies still in the hands of God so that he may pour in his light and grace, mold us to his likeness, and grave his own image there. This is affective prayer,

or the prayer of quiet, or the prayer of simplicity. Bossuet says, "After meditation, the soul, by her fidelity in mortification and recollection, usually receives a surer and more interior prayer which we may call the prayer of simplicity and which consists in simple interior gaze, regard, or loving attention directed toward some divine object, whether God in himself or one of his perfections, it may be the Lord Jesus, or some one of his mysteries, or some other Christian truth. The soul, discarding all reasoning, then employs a gentle contemplation by which she is maintained in peace." After that comes what are called the true mystic states of which we cannot write here.

That, broadly, is the way of the going. Some will say, "Yes, but many people have no vocation for this kind of thing." That may be true, but it is a dangerous concession. Few know until they have given at least a year or two to the practice of accredited method whether or not it is for them. Of course the way is long toward the full development of the faculties of the soul. To learn the art of conversation with God, to acquire the power of discerning motive, making self-examinations, gaining control over thought and the imagination, concentrating the soul's gaze, are achievements as difficult, say, as learning the violin, and to be approached somewhat in the same way. As in the expression of music we have to bring into play muscles, practice poise of body, position of finger, hand and arm, in order to catch the intoxicating rapture of that which is beyond sense, so in matters of soul we must recognize the value of the senses, physical gesture, postures, places, times and seasons, bringing all these lowly things into the service of the soul. Here I think we have much to learn from the Catholic methods, and all our psychology and the sounder behaviorist philosophies astonishingly support these ancient ways. We have to remember we are not disembodied spirits, we are in the flesh, and the gospel of the incarnation is a gospel of the word made flesh. We are not to discard or dishonor the flesh, but use it as our Lord did sacramentally. Here is a matter of great controversy, but the free churches have to come to terms with it.

Extreme Eastern mystics of the earliest centuries, extreme puritans and the false mystics have been guilty of a breach with nature and the world, setting forth an impossible and an unchristian ideal, unchristian in the light of the incarnation, which in its extended meaning is the sanctification, not the destruction of the flesh. Our current philosophies are emphasizing the unity of life, and indeed of all things, declaring the rich complexity within the nature of things, the interdependence of all, and however much we may correct the extravagances of these suggestive approaches to the truth of Being, they do directly or indirectly support that unity of

flesh and word achieved in Jesus Christ, the weak, base, foolish things with which God wrought our redemption. Simple methods are in danger of those who said, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" who despised the waters of Jordan as against the proud waters of Abana and Pharpar.

So we would advise those who mean to live a full prayer life to set up a definite place in the home for devotional exercises, wherever possible, for it is "the tree that has its roots somewhere that feeds on the universe." This we have already acknowledged in the building of churches, and communion tables, and pulpits. We have conceded thus to the senses, not for a moment teaching that God is contained in these things, but recognizing that they have secondary importance which is near to first importance. Some small furniture is good for our private altar, it may be a kneeling cushion, book board, a few flowers, a picture, perhaps even a cross, or a bit of blue material to aid concentration and to suggest. Times and seasons should be observed, never to be departed from except under necessity.

Some have objected that all habits that are psychological tricks are attempts to circumvent the will, creating deep subconscious strength, but reducing the deliberateness of the act, and therefore degrading real spiritual life. I think there is much ignorance in the objection. For these punctual performances of prayer are all acts of will, and if the prayer life is to be followed through, there will be plenty of room for the exercise of the will in the later as well as the earlier stages. Indeed, the repetition at particular times of sentences, ejaculatory words, and liturgical prayer has been criticized because they are only acts of will without thought or feeling. We have taught that people only truly pray when they feel like it, and some have the notion that they need not pray until they feel like it. That means for many very little prayer, and means less and less as the years go by. Further, you cannot tell whether you deeply feel like prayer until you have prayed a good while. The idea assumes that prayer is all talking to God and leaves out the fact that prayer means that God may have something to say to us and it is well to listen. Again, one cannot always give thought to prayer, the mind is tired or distracted, and one must certainly not attempt to work up feeling—that is dangerous; so when thought and feeling are wanting we may and ought to offer up an act of will, perhaps a mere mechanical repetition of the Lord's Prayer. That is all we may give at that moment, and I have no compunction in recommending what seems a mechanical recitation providing that at the outset of such a prayer there is definite intention, a deliberate act of will, and a conscious offering of the same to God.

That leads on to the matter of meditation. In meditation all the constituents of fullest prayer may be found. An incident of the Gospels is taken, or some virtue, or sin. The first stage in a meditation is the use of the imagination in visualizing the act, the conditions within which a word was spoken, who spoke the word, why it was spoken at that particular time, the full live recovery of the incident so far as possible. The second stage is to see the bearing of that upon my own life here and now, to be concluded by a prayer for this day, that I may not offend or that I may so obey. Allow me to give an instance. Let us take as our meditation, say, the wounded hands of Jesus on the cross. I must first dwell for a few moments on the fact that a nail was driven through the palm of that hand, the hand that stretched out to heal the diseases of men, to touch the fevered brow and restore the coolness of sanity, the hand that accompanied in gesture the words, "Come unto me." I must think of the pain of a nail driven through flesh, and the pain of a nail through his flesh. The second stage is to recall in what way I have wounded that hand by my sin, how my own life is keeping unhealed the nail-prints of Jesus, in what way I, by neglect or spiritual opposition, keep that hand locked, unreleased for blessing and good, the whole closing with a prayer that I may enter into the fellowship of his suffering, bear in my own body the marks of the Lord Jesus, deliver the spirit of Christ from bondage for free course in human life.

I have tried to indicate in this article that here is a way that has been trod for centuries by many souls, that the landmarks are clear though the experiences are varied, and yet with such striking likeness that a science has been built up from the material. We certainly are not growing this experience, we are not encouraging it, we are not providing for it. I know the prejudices against these things for their likeness to Catholic methods, but we must not allow the bogie of Rome to impoverish our spiritual life any more than we must allow the bogie of Bolshevism to interfere with our proceeding along the line of social reform and justice. Many things are not within our control, such as filling churches or compelling people to think about God. One thing is within our control. We may ourselves grow in goodness, in the devout life, in sensitive awareness of God, and we may keep a way open that when the weary world is tired of its wanderings and asks if there be a way, a way to peace, to inward quiet, to the integration of all life in God, we may be able to show that way, prove ourselves familiar with its windings, its steps, its levels, and heights, and its most glorious end, which is the end of all desire.



# A Preface to Theology

WILLIAM HENRY BERNHARDT

**T**HEOLOGY finds itself to-day in a rather unusual quandary. The difficulty is not that so many different answers are given to its questions, nor is it that some of these questions cannot be answered satisfactorily on the basis of present information. In this respect current theology differs little from theology of the past and of many other fields to-day. The situation is more embarrassing. There is great uncertainty as to what questions are legitimately its own. Surrounded by a whole brood of questions, theology at the present time seems unable to recognize its own.

This difficulty grows out of the present inability to recognize theology's basic subject matter, namely, religion. Until some conclusion can be reached as to the general area in which theological investigation is legitimate, we shall probably continue to label anything and everything which happens to interest preachers and theologians as religious. In the meantime the intelligent contemporary is left in confusion. This state of affairs is brought sharply to one's attention when he examines books supposed to be religious or theological. When one considers books labeled "Biology," he is more or less certain as to the general nature of the subject matter to be discussed—unless perchance he selects a book on solar biology—even though he may have no inkling as to the answers to be made to the questions discussed. The same thing is true of the other sciences and philosophy. Each of these fields is more or less clearly defined. But this is hardly true of books listed as religious or theological. One cannot be certain as to the contents of such books until he has examined them. He may find himself reading ethics tinged with emotion; he may discover himself perusing sociological treatises written with more fervor than is customary; he may find himself immersed in abnormal psychology written by one who finds the field wholly absorbing and who therefore decides that it is religion; or he may find himself reading the impassioned writings of some philosophical physicist whose chief emotional satisfaction is found in the struggle with fundamental concepts, and whose joy in this activity has converted him into an enthusiast and convinced him that his physics is religion. Manifestly, so long as anything and everything can masquerade as religion, preachers and theologians who seek to isolate their field and its problems face a difficult task.



## I. *Is Theology Possible?*

A basic question, therefore, which every student in the field of religion must face is this: Is theology possible? This is no idle query. There are at least two attitudes toward religion which deny the possibility of theology in any historic meaning of the term. Theology has been defined as "the systematic arrangement of the truths pertaining to the revelation of God,"<sup>1</sup> as a "rational interpretation" of the Christian faith,<sup>2</sup> and as "the organized statement of the beliefs of Christians."<sup>3</sup> In every case, however, these theologians have treated theology as not only an organized statement but as also a critical evaluation of the beliefs of Christians. We may define theology, then, as an organized statement and critical evaluation of the religious beliefs of Christians. The question we face then is this: Is theology as such an organized statement and critical evaluation of the religious beliefs of Christians possible?

The first of the two attitudes toward religion which make theology impossible is that which views religion as an undifferentiated response of man to that which he considers most worthwhile. The difficulty here is found in the connotation of the term worthwhile. It may be a synthesis of all values, or it may be some specific value selected from the total list known to man. The conclusion usually reached is that each individual reserves for himself the right to decide what is most worthwhile. Religion thus becomes an undifferentiated response to undifferentiated values. As such it is indefinable, for as a recent writer on logic says: "Vagueness of meaning is the mind's original sin. To be able to think clearly about a subject means that the ideas with which we do the thinking must be clearly defined. To define means to mark off boundary lines, to set limits, to hem in and pin down; it is to fix the meaning of terms."<sup>4</sup> If, as this attitude suggests, religion is inherently indefinable, then it is impossible to develop a theology which is more than one individual's intellectual reaction to his own peculiar experience. An organized statement and critical evaluation of beliefs presupposes definite concepts which can be organized and criticized. If there are no clearly defined and generally accepted concepts, then the theologian becomes a myth-maker or a poet, and not the spokesman for an organized group.

<sup>1</sup> W. B. Pope, *A Compendium of Christian Theology*. New York, 1881, Phillips and Hunt. Volume I, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> C. A. Beckwith, *The Realities of Christian Theology*. Boston and New York, 1906, Houghton Mifflin Company; p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Shailer Mathews, *The Faith of Modernism*. New York, 1925, The Macmillan Company; pp. 62ff.

<sup>4</sup> M. T. McClure, *An Introduction to the Logic of Reflection*. New York, 1925, Henry Holt and Company; pp. 194-5.

The second attitude which makes theology impossible is that which views religion itself as illegitimate. If, as some writers assume, religion is but an out-moded "short-cut" to the goods of life attempted by impotent people,<sup>5</sup> then obviously it has no place in the scientific world of to-day. Furthermore, while it may be possible to organize the unintelligent beliefs of nonscientific people, it is impossible to evaluate them critically in the light of the total knowledge available to-day without rejecting wholly this naïve attempt to achieve values. Thus theology as the organized statement and critical evaluation of the religious beliefs of Christians is impossible, assuming that such organization and evaluation must be done by intelligent men.

Before accepting such conclusions, however, it may be well to consider some other phases of the question facing us. We may discover that these men are not discussing religion at all, and although their remarks may be ingenuous and interesting, they are completely beside the point. If religion is to be refused a place in the halls of modern civilization because of its past mistakes, then every other phase of human activity may likewise find itself out of doors, especially if any serious attempt is made to uncover mistakes in its past. The ancient scientist made his mistakes, and if his present worth is to be determined by his past performance, then he also stands condemned. Theology is possible to-day if it can localize its field, state its postulates, and develop its logic. If it proves to be impossible, this will be due to its present inabilities rather than to its past mistakes.

## II. *A Hint from History*

Historic theology had its field delimited as definitely as philosophy, science, or any other enterprise of the human spirit. It sought answers to three questions: (1) Man and his needs; (2) God and his grace; and (3) Methods whereby man and his needs might be brought into helpful relations to God and his grace. The first was the problem of the function of religion in human life; the second was the problem of the nature and value of God, and the third was the problem of methodology in salvation. This particular order was not always followed. A theologian might begin with God instead of man, or he might start with ways of salvation, but no matter where he began, his discussion confined itself to these problems and their implications. Needless to say, the theologians of the past did not agree as to the answers they gave to these questions, even though they

<sup>5</sup>Cf., T. V. Smith, *The Philosophic Way of Life*. Chicago, 1929, The University of Chicago Press; pp. 7ff.

did agree as to the questions to be asked. More often than not, they found themselves in violent disagreement with regard to the answers to be given to the agreed questions. It is at this point that the contemporary preacher and theologian suffers in comparison with his predecessor. We disagree not only with reference to the answers we make, but even with reference to the questions to be asked.

The way out of the present difficulty may appear simple. All that is necessary is that some genius shall provide us with a definition of religion which will be acceptable to a majority of the students in the field of religion. This definition would delimit the field of study and determine the questions legitimate for theological research. But in the light of historic and recent achievements, it is becoming increasingly apparent that no one definition of religion will prove satisfactory to the majority of those who labor theologically. Theologians, taking a hint from laborers in other fields, may as well agree that they purpose to disagree; that they find it impossible to arrive at a unanimity of opinion with regard to the nature of religion, the nature and needs of man, or the nature and value of God. By so doing they will place themselves with the philosophers of the past and the present. Even a cursory glance at the opening chapters of an anthology of recent philosophy in which such students as James, Laird, Perry, Hocking, Dewey, Radhakrishnan, Montague, Broad, and Muirhead each presents his views concerning the nature and significance of philosophy will convince one that there is at least a modicum of disagreement among philosophers.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, there is sufficient agreement among philosophers as to the basic problems of philosophy so that a book on philosophy may be recognized by its contents as well as by its title. Generally speaking, philosophers confine their interest to three fields: (1) Epistemology, or the problem of knowledge; (2) Metaphysics, or the problem of the nature of reality; and (3) Axiology, or the problem of value. In this respect they are at one with historic theology: they have agreed to disagree, but on agreed problems. And until contemporary theologians, professional and otherwise, reach some agreement as to the loci of their disagreements, progress in religious thought will be seriously retarded, to say the least.

The solution of our difficulty which is suggested by a study of history and a comparison with related fields to-day involves two steps: First, a frank recognition of the impossibility of reaching general agreement as to

<sup>6</sup> Cf., D. S. Robinson, *An Anthology of Recent Philosophy*. New York, 1929, Thomas Y. Crowell Co.; pp. 3-94.

the answers to be given to specific theological questions; second, a tentative agreement as to the general problems which are legitimate for theological investigation. In this latter proposal the history of Christian thought offers a suggestion. We stated above that historic theology confined itself to three broad questions: (1) the function of religion, or the significance of religion in human life; (2) the nature of man and God: the nature of man which made religion possible, and the nature of God which evoked the religious response; and (3) the techniques developed to aid man in his efforts to gain help from God.

That these are not merely historic questions but that they are vital to-day is evidenced by the fact that theological thought is still focalized upon them. Regarding the problem of the function of religion, Professor W. M. Horton has recently summarized the three answers which have received emphasis during the present century.<sup>7</sup> The problem finds expression in every book or magazine related to the field of religion in any way.<sup>8</sup> The historic problem of the nature of God is likewise of vital interest to contemporary students of religion. Recent surveys of the literature in this field suggest the vitality of this interest,<sup>9</sup> as does also the debate under way between H. N. Wieman, D. C. Macintosh, and M. C. Otto.<sup>10</sup> The third of the historic problems, that of methods or techniques of salvation, finds expression in such recent discussions as *The Finding of God*,<sup>11</sup> by E. S. Brightman; *Pathways to the Reality of God*, by Rufus M. Jones;<sup>12</sup> *Methods of Private Religious Living*, by H. N. Wieman,<sup>13</sup> and the recent revival of interest in mysticism.

That these three are the legitimate problems for the religious thinker becomes more evident as one studies the history of non-Christian religious thought. Every religion which has maintained itself for any length of time and has appealed to a significant group of people has done so because of the values its adherents found in it. That they often sought mistakenly

<sup>7</sup> *A Psychological Approach to Theology*. New York and London, 1931, Harper and Brothers; pp. 30ff.

<sup>8</sup> Cf., *Religious Realism*, edited by D. C. Macintosh. New York, 1931, The Macmillan Company. Chapters: I. "Is Religion Important?" by Arthur Kenyon Rogers; VI. "God and Value," by Henry Nelson Wieman; IX. "Can Religious Intuition Give Knowledge of Reality?" by Eugene William Lyman. Also "The Goal of Religion," by A. Stewart Woodburne, in *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. XII, No. 2, April, 1932, and several articles in the first two issues of *RELIGION IN LIFE*, whose very title is suggestive of this interest.

<sup>9</sup> Cf., H. F. Rall, "The Idea of God in Recent Literature," in *RELIGION IN LIFE*, Vol. I, No. 1, Winter Number, 1932, pp. 55-69. Also H. P. Van Dusen, "Trends in Contemporary Theism," *RELIGION IN LIFE*. Spring Number, 1932, pp. 179-190. C. A. Beckwith, *The Idea of God*. New York, 1922. The Macmillan Company.

<sup>10</sup> *The Christian Century*, 1932. Chicago, Ill.

<sup>11</sup> The Abingdon Press, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago. 1931.

<sup>12</sup> New York, 1931. The Macmillan Company.

<sup>13</sup> New York, 1929. The Macmillan Company.

is not important. It is sufficient to note that religions exist and persist because of the values people find in them. In one case it may be the desire to escape from the thralldom of existence which drives men to religion, and the hope of escape from this evil which motivates them in the continuance of the practice of the religion accepted. In other cases it is precisely the opposite value which men seek in religion. In both cases, however, religion maintains itself because of its functional significance. Again, the presence of such basic concepts as Brahman, Ahura Mazda, Allah, Karma, and Jehovah implies a vital interest in non-Christian religions in that reinterpretation of the existential medium which for Christians is the problem of God. Finally, the question: "What must I do to be saved?" has never been far from the lips of the aspirant to religious values, no matter what his religion may have been. In early Buddhism an elaborate technique was developed to aid the individual in the effort to suppress all desire. In Hinduism, three ways were open to the worshiper: the way of knowledge (*jnana-marga*); the way of devotion (*bhakti-marga*); or the way of good works (*karma-marga*).<sup>14</sup> In Christianity a multitude of techniques have been developed to suit the temperaments of Western peoples. Some form of individual or social participation in the process of realizing religious values seems to be a constant factor in all great religions.

### III. Possible Postulates

While the study of history enables a student to discover the problems which occupied the thought of theologians of the past, it does not in itself compel the student to agree with historic theologians in their delimitation of the field of theological study. The significance of the past depends upon the postulates or presuppositions adopted by the student concerned. In order, therefore, to continue our search for the basic principles which must underlie systematic theology, we propose two postulates which appear to be necessary if current systems of theology are to serve our day as the systems of the past served theirs.

The first of these possible postulates is this: The rather widespread attempt on the part of men to find cosmic companionship and metaphysical support for their values indicates (1) the presence within men of a need for such companionship or support, or both, and (2) the presence of that in the universe which makes possible at least a minimal satisfaction of these needs. In other words, theology appears possible only if the metaphysical aspects of religion are recognized. There are two such aspects. The first

<sup>14</sup> Cf., R. E. Hume, *The World's Living Religions*. New York, 1925, Charles Scribner's Sons; p. 38.



is the attempt to find cosmic companionship. In Christianity this cosmic companionship is often defined as fellowship with God. Or, as Professor Harris Franklin Rall has stated it: "The heart of religion becomes a personal fellowship morally conditioned."<sup>15</sup> The personal fellowship here considered is not that found in social relations, but with a being cosmic in scope. This statement is more personal than that of many others who belong to the Christian movement, and of many non-Christian philosophers of religion. At the same time, in other religions some form of personal relationship or adjustment which is emotionally satisfying is a constant factor, particularly in mature stages of the various religions. The attempt on the part of the worshipers of Brahma to realize their identity with him is definitely such an attempt to achieve an emotional adjustment to the fundamental aspect of reality.<sup>16</sup> The worshipers of Allah are noted for their reverence, an emotional adjustment, while in Buddhism this emotional adjustment is likewise basic.

The second metaphysical aspect of religion is the desire for cosmic support of human values. This involves a reinterpretation of existence and the values found in it, and a reinterpretation of the medium in which existence is found. By existence is meant the individual existent himself; by existential medium is meant that which produced man, sustains and nourishes him, and evokes from him all types of responses, physical, emotional, and intellectual. The common terms are of course man and God, but these terms are specifically Christian, and are variously interpreted even in it. There is little unanimity of opinion as to the nature of man, the existent, or God, the existential medium. If we are to find terms which contain within them the possibility of widespread acceptance, it is necessary for us to use such abstract terms as existent and existential medium. In Christianity God has oft been "Him in whom we live and move and have our being," or the existential medium. In other religions the same functional significance is symbolized by other terms. These concepts have emerged as men reinterpreted existence and the existential medium in the effort to find cosmic support for their values. So at Nicea men identified God with the creator and controller of all. In early Buddhism, man's destiny was inextricably united with the Law of Karma, the fundamental phase of the existential medium. In Mohammedanism man's destiny was determined by Allah, the Determiner of Destiny.

If religion is to remain a distinct phase of Western culture, it will be

<sup>15</sup> *The Meaning of God*. Nashville, 1925, The Cokesbury Press; p. 137.

<sup>16</sup> Cf., W. K. Wright, *A Student's Philosophy of Religion*. New York, 1927, The Macmillan Company; pp. 74-75.



necessary for the leaders of religious thought to accept the postulate that religion without metaphysics is impossible. If this is denied, or should prove to be invalid, there appears to be no good reason to continue to use the term religion or to support specifically religious institutions. We may continue to use the Sunday as a rest day, churches as social institutions, or even philanthropic institutions, but the effort to discover cosmic companionship or metaphysical support for our values will cease to occupy our attention. And this leads us to the second postulate.

The second postulate may be stated as follows: Some continuity of meaning is necessary if we are to continue the use of historic terms. As T. V. Smith stated it, rather humorously: "When people really believe in God, they have something specific to call religious, and so do not need to describe scientific experimentation, or secular philanthropy, or æsthetic enjoyment as religion. There are other terms available, and historically sanctioned, to describe the latter activities. It represents verbal economy and mental clarity to surrender terms when their normal meaning and natural content is gone."<sup>17</sup> One is under no obligation to accept Mr. Smith's conclusion that religion is impossible to-day, but there seems to be no escape from his suggestion that if we are interested in science, or philanthropy, or æsthetics, we should use terms which are historically sanctioned to describe these activities instead of overworking the term religion, which, incidentally, had a signification of its own. Mr. Smith might have added other terms without exhausting the list of activities masquerading as religion. The suggestion we make here is that if we are to use the term religion at all we must retain at least a minimum of meaning-relation with the past use of the term.

#### IV. *The Provinces of Theology*

We are now in position to suggest a rather definite delimitation of the field which belongs to theology. So far as historic Christianity is concerned—and the evidence apparently justifies the belief that the other great religions of the world do not differ at this point—religion may be described as a complex experience whose function is that of achieving or conserving values through a metaphysical interpretation of existence and the existential medium and by means of some technique. This is, admittedly, an attempt to state as abstractly as possible the fundamental elements involved in religion as historically developed and currently practiced. It is abstract in the sense that it merely designates the three aspects of religion—

<sup>17</sup> *The Philosophic Way of Life*. Chicago, 1929, The University of Chicago Press; pp. 10-11.

that of function, of interpretation in ultimate terms, and of technique—without putting definite content into any of these phases. Nothing definite is said concerning the specific function religion has in life; or what metaphysical interpretation of man and God, or existence and the existential medium, is logically possible and religiously satisfactory; or what techniques are emotionally effective. The description attempts to determine, on the basis of the hints from history and the postulates proposed, what the problems are with which the theologian should concern himself. Each theologian, as the spokesman of a religious group, will complete the description until it becomes a concrete or real definition of religion as understood and practiced by him and his group. Thus the theist may define religion as the attempt to achieve and conserve ethico-social values through an interpretation of man and God in terms which make personality ultimate, and fellowship with God in the service of man as the technique designed to promote these ends. The function of religion in this case is the enhancement of personalities. This function is justified intellectually by interpreting God and man in terms which make personality metaphysically ultimate. This interpretation becomes emotionally effective and the object of religion furthered by active participation in the task of personal and social reconstruction conceived as fellowship with God. If, with early Buddhism, the function of religion is that of releasing man from the chains of a repugnant existence, then the interpretation of man and God, existence and the existential medium, will be such as to depreciate the value of individual personality, and the techniques engaged in will adjust the participant emotionally to the denial of the biological urge for preservation. If, as appears reasonable to others, the function of religion is that of helping men to achieve a satisfactory “felt” relationship to God and a hopeful adjustment to the nonmanipulable aspects of existence, then the reinterpretation of existence and the existential medium will be such that this relation between God and man is possible, and values will be so related to God that apparent losses may be sustained here without the loss of hope. Furthermore, the techniques developed will be designed to further this emotional adjustment to God and to the loss of values incidental to life in a world where the category of the nonmanipulable is valid. The worship engaged in will enable one to meet the nonmanipulable in the spirit of Him who said, “Not my will, but Thine be done.”

We suggest, then, as a preface to theological thought to-day that theologians accept some such delimitation of the field which is of primary concern to them. As citizens of the state and members of a family group,

they may have many other interests involving various phases of life. As theologians and philosophers of religion, however, they are specialists, set apart to cultivate intensively one phase of life, namely, the religious. As specialists they are responsible for a given field, the field of religion. That field consists of three provinces: first, a function; second, theology in the narrow sense of a metaphysical interpretation of existence and the existential medium; and third, some form or forms of technique designed to further the function and emotionalize the intellectual interpretation. As theologians, they are engaged in the task of developing an organized statement and critical evaluation of the beliefs of Christians with reference to these three problems. Whatever else they may do may be interesting and valuable, but it is not theology. Theology is concerned with religion, and not with what happens to interest the individual thinker.

If this suggestion, or one functionally equivalent, that religion consists of the attempt to achieve or conserve values through an interpretation of existence and the existential medium in metaphysical terms, and by means of some technique, is adopted, the theologian will find himself rather closely related to others whose commerce is with ideas. He will find himself at one with the philosopher who confines his attention to the problems of epistemology, metaphysics, and values. Like the philosopher, he will find himself in disagreement many times with those who share his labors, but he will find himself in disagreement on agreed points. And, just as it is now possible to identify a book on philosophy by its contents, so it should be possible to identify a book on religion or theology by its contents.

#### V. *The Category of the Nonreligious*

While the suggestion made above may appear innocuous, it has certain implications which can hardly be described by that adjective. The first and most obvious is that certain forms of activity which are now called religious will no longer be included in that category. From certain points of view, the goal of religion and of ethics is identical. One may define the goal of ethics as the attempt to achieve for each individual the fullest self-realization possible, and a like development for all who are related to him.<sup>18</sup> The function of religion is definable in precisely the same terms, according to many advocates of ethical religion.<sup>19</sup> Strictly speaking, however, there is still a distinct difference between religion and ethics, even

<sup>18</sup> Cf., W. K. Wright, *A General Introduction to Ethics*. New York, 1929, The Macmillan Company, p. 334. Bibliography of books in general agreement on this point is found on p. 355.

<sup>19</sup> Cf., C. E. M. Joad, *The Present and Future of Religion*. New York, 1930, The Macmillan Company, pp. 195-244 for recent statement.

though their goals may be stated in the same terms. The distinction will be found in the fact that for religion metaphysics is necessary, whereas such is not of necessity the case with ethics. The goal of the government of the U. S. S. R. could well be stated as the attempt to aid each individual to find the fullest self-realization possible which is consistent with a like development on the part of all his countrymen. But in Soviet Russia the attempt to discover a satisfactory relationship with God defined in metaphysical terms is specifically denied, as is also the attempt to find cosmic support for human values. The conclusion we reach is that it is impossible to differentiate religion, ethics, and an atheistic form of social order unless the metaphysical aspects of religion are recognized as necessary and integral parts of religion. It may well be that there is no real distinction between religion and other forms of human activity. If that be the case, however, it behooves intelligent students of religion to recognize that fact and to use a less confusing terminology. If reputable theologians insist that the characteristic mark of religion is its quest for the good life, then in the interest of mental clarity they should give up the term religion and use terms which have historic sanction. If there is no continuity of meaning discoverable in the historic and present use of the term religion, we had better give up the term religion entirely. If, on the other hand, the metaphysical aspect of religion is a necessary and integral part of it, then a frank recognition of this fact will enable us to differentiate religion from related activities, even though there is an element of similarity in them.

The acceptance of the postulate that religion consists of function, metaphysical interpretation, and technique, definitely excludes from the ranks of theologians such charming gentlemen as M. C. Otto, A. E. Haydon, and other ecclesiastical humanists. Their refusal to recognize the metaphysical phase of religion as a necessary phase of it excludes them by definition. They are engaged in an exceedingly valuable piece of work, that of generating enthusiasm for the good life, and as such exponents of ethico-social idealism deserve our heartiest approbation and support, but so long as they deny a necessary phase of religion, they can hardly be numbered among its exponents. The same thing is true of those who would call scientific experimentation, or any other secular phase of human activity, by the name of religion. If the term religion has a definite meaning, as suggested above, then those who deny this deny themselves the privilege of using the term to designate the activity in which they are interested. Long years ago men recognized the fact that if intellectual co-operation is to be possible, men must agree that A is A; that the concept red must be used

consistently to designate a specific color rather than any color which might fascinate the particular student.

### VI. *Religion Without Theology?*

The second implication of this conception of religion is that the division between religion and theology is not fundamental. Religion, as pointed out above, is the attempt to achieve or conserve values through an interpretation of existence and the existential medium in metaphysical terms, and by means of some technique. Thus religion includes within itself a metaphysical element, namely, the attempt to find cosmic companionship and cosmic support for our values. This attempt to find cosmic companionship involves some conception of the nature of the cosmic companion or God. So also with the attempt to find cosmic support for our values. These are not meaningless experiences, as they would be if theological elements were excluded.<sup>20</sup> One does not experience religion, and then theologize about it in his leisure moments. In the very act of experiencing God, man is in touch with a definite God. He does not have an experience of deity and then wonder whether it was the God of Hinduism, or Mohammedanism, or perchance of Christianity with whom he had come into direct and immediate relations. One experiences a deity as defined. He may later change his conceptions as a result of reflection upon experience, but this does not mean that he finds himself in touch with an undefined God. Thus theology is an integral part or phase of religion rather than something which may or may not accompany it.

The recognition of the validity of this corollary will result in a definite change in the attitude of many Protestant ministers toward theological studies. We may paraphrase the late Borden Parker Bowne and say: "It is not, then, a question of having or not having a theology, but of having a good or a bad one."<sup>21</sup> Difficult as the task may be for him, the minister is under the stern necessity imposed upon him by the nature of his task of understanding the fundamentals of theological study, involving as it does the logic of religion, the psychology of the emotions and the philosophy of mind, and God as an interpretation of metaphysical reality. He must not only understand the basic elements involved in these fields, but he must make or accept some synthesis which meets the tests of logic and of value. The day when the minister could treat theology cavalierly would seem to

<sup>20</sup> Cf., "The Place of Definition in Religious Experience," by Professor E. E. Aubrey, *The Journal of Philosophy*, October 9, 1930; pp. 561-572.

<sup>21</sup> *Personalism*. Boston and New York, 1908, Houghton Mifflin Company; p. 6. We have substituted "theology" for "philosophy."



have passed. Religion without theology is comparable to ethics without a conception of the good.

### VII. *The Two Logics of Religion*

The third implication of this conception of religion is probably the most vital even though it may appear abstract. It is that religion really includes two logics instead of one. Religion includes both interpretation and technique; metaphysics and worship; intellectual and emotional satisfactions. As such it contains both a logic of interpretation and a logic of worship; a logic of reason and a logic of the emotions. When the problem of the ultimate nature of God and man is before the theologian, he becomes a metaphysician, engaged in the most fundamental of metaphysical tasks. His reasoning must stand the test of careful analysis and criticism. In the attempt to reach conclusions concerning the nature of God and man the "brute" facts of existence must be used. By "brute" facts we mean those which are not subject to imaginative manipulation. The world and God or the existential medium either are or are not what the religious individual may wish them to be. Whether or not they are can be determined only by a careful study of the relevant data available. And the data relevant to the solution of metaphysical questions have a "doxic," or self-assertive character, as was pointed out recently by Professor Raphael Demos.<sup>22</sup> The metaphysician's data, therefore, must be recognized as existent and persistent, even though they are not absolutely static. The data, in other words, and not the theories, are the invariables in metaphysical thinking. The attempt to develop a tenable metaphysical interpretation of God and man without recognizing the nature of the data and the logical methods required by the nature of the problem results in a haphazard metaphysics. Even though a given theologian or preacher may adopt an epistemology which permits him to accept the conclusions of an external authority, or which permits of immediate knowledge of the soul and God, the relation of this epistemology to the metaphysics accepted must be carefully examined, lest the system be vitiated by inner contradictions. The theologian, therefore, as metaphysician, must subject his reasoning to the most rigorous demands of logic when he is engaged with the problem of the nature of God and man.

When he is concerned about techniques, that is, with worship, prayer, mysticism, and all other forms of individual and group participation in religion, the theologian employs a different logic. We are recognizing the

<sup>22</sup> "On Persuasion." *The Journal of Philosophy*. April 28, 1932, p. 226.



fact that these religious techniques have a subjective rather than an objective significance. Prayer, instead of being an instrument for effecting changes in the weather, for instance, is recognized to be an important means of discovering a satisfactory relationship with God, and for keeping alive this consciousness of God's presence. The test of prayer, then, must be one which applies to the subjective life of man rather than to effects in the world without. The same test applies to such forms of worship as mysticism or sacramentalism. They are means designed to awaken the worshiper to the presence of God, or to aid him in making the necessary emotional adjustment to the ends sought in religion. The logical test here is pragmatic: those forms of worship which lead men to the consciousness of God, or which awaken in him the consciousness of the cosmic significance of his values, are valid. Those forms of worship which fail at these vital points are invalid. This test is one which applies to the emotions, and may well be termed the logic of the emotions. As such it is radically different from that which is used in the search for an adequate metaphysical interpretation of God and man. The criterion of metaphysical theories must be objective because it is concerned with the truth of theories as to the nature of reality. The criterion of the validity of types of worship must be subjective since that which it tests consists of emotional responses and attitudes.

The failure to recognize the presence of these two logics has vitiated much theological thought. The truth of certain theories concerning the nature of God has been based upon the fact that these theories edified believers. That a given sermon or the repetition of certain creeds is highly satisfactory to the emotions of a congregation is a tribute to the efficiency of the service of worship, but it has no necessary relation to the truth of the sermon or creed. Theories as to the nature of God and man must be tested by something other than emotion. Furthermore, the fact that a given world-view is evocative of zeal for ethical and social living cannot be accepted as proof of the truth of the view presented. During the World War certain theories concerning the nature of the German soldiers proved to be evocative of great zeal for the prosecution of the war, but this enthusiasm hardly proved the truth of the theories. The truth of these views of the German soldier and civilian was tested after the war by a comparison with the facts in the case, and not by the emotion evoked in soldiers and civilians. A recognition of these two logics in religion and the necessity of alteration in their use would seem to be a minimal prerequisite to adequate thinking in theology.

The principle of alternation, however, must be supplemented by another, that of correlation. This principle states that the logics included in religion must not contradict one another. A brief glance at the relation of prayer to certain theories of the function and interpretational elements of religion will suggest the significance of this principle of correlation. In recent Protestant theology the function of religion has been stated in terms of the social gospel. God has been viewed as an ultimate person, and the world as organized about personal ends. From this point of view, religion functions best when it stimulates individuals and groups to ethical and social living.<sup>23</sup> The techniques suggested have been various, but emphasis has naturally been placed upon those activities which result in the enhancement of ethico-social living. In an address before the recent General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the speaker lamented the fact that Methodists are forgetting to pray. The truth is that Protestants have been taught that prayer is any form of activity productive of ethico-social values, with the result that stress has been laid upon "effective" prayer. By effective prayer is meant active participation with God in the achievement of the goals sought. Prayer, in other words, has become overt activity designed to help others. Prayer as the attempt to get into sympathetic relations with God; to view one's difficulties in the light of his far-seeing eye; to awaken in the worshiper a clearer consciousness of the presence and sympathy of God, seems to be rather an indirect way of helping each individual to get a fair share of the products of this machine civilization. Prayer is losing its significance for Protestantism because its conception of the function of religion and the nature of the world deny the validity of prayer as effective. The logic of this view of the world denies the validity of such practices as mysticism, prayer, devotional reading and quiet worship unless these become purely instrumental in character—instrumental in fitting the individual to achieve the things of the good life. For that reason it is necessary for the student of religion to keep in mind the two principles of alternation and correlation. He must not seek to prove the truth of his metaphysical views of God, the world, and man by the emotional effectiveness of his service of worship. Neither should he attempt to retain or to rehabilitate methods of worship which are denied by his conceptions of the function of religion, of God and man, and the nature of the world. If preachers and theologians will agree in the near future as to the problems which belong to them as leaders in reli-

<sup>23</sup> Cf., "The Significance of Jesus in Our Modern Age," by Harry F. Ward. *The World Tomorrow*. January, 1931; pp. 15-17.

gious thought and practice, it should not be difficult to find our way out of the present state of confusion as to the business of ministers and teachers as servants of the church. Furthermore, it should be as possible to delimit the field of religion and theology as it is to delimit the fields of philosophy, ethics, and the sciences. It should also be possible for us to state our postulates and recognize our logics. With the increase in the general intelligence of the average Protestant congregation it has become necessary for those in positions of leadership to do this much at least by way of a preface to a theology worthy of our congregations.

# World Religious Leaders and International Peace

HENRY A. ATKINSON

**A**N editor assumes grave responsibility these days when he asks for an article on the peace opinions of a group of religious leaders. The writer of such an article can with some care select those whose opinions he favors and from them draw conclusions to his own comfort. Or he may emphasize the importance of one group of thinkers and slight another. It is not an easy task and the temptation to slur over many great ideas is made stronger by the difficulties inherent in the fact that there is no one definition of religion that is applicable universally. A very wide difference exists not only between the various faiths but in the meaning and spirit of religion as between East and West. In most of the Oriental religions the very word connotes Monasticism or an idea of holy detachment from the world. The great religions of the East are esoteric and mystical, having an inner meaning for the individual. Gandhi is without doubt one of the foremost religious leaders of our day. I first saw him at his Ashram in Sabarmati, sitting upon the floor spinning, and as I looked at this little man, who weighs less than a hundred pounds, wearing no clothes except a loin cloth and a length of rough cloth thrown about his shoulders, he seemed so insignificant it was hard to realize that I was in the presence of a man whom so many millions of people revere. When I left him, however, I realized the strength of his character and that I had caught something of the contagion of his spirit. Gandhi's religion is embedded in the heart of all his activities; it guides his thinking and shapes his course of action. In reply to my question, "Do you think religion can function in bringing about a better condition of affairs among men?" he said:

Religion is to me and most Easterners a personal matter. At bottom all the problems we have are religious problems, and religion comes to have an influence upon the solution of these questions, but the great difficulty is this—you bring together leaders of all the religions and when they meet they are on their good behavior. They want to say the best thing in the best way, not only about themselves but about their fellow men. They are not wholly sincere, nor are they honest, either in what they say about themselves or of others, nor do they give an accurate description of the forces that are operating in their own countries and in their own spheres of influence. Consequently, religion always seems to have more influence than it really has. Take for instance two speakers of opposite faiths at the same meeting. They are in perfect accord. Each expresses his opinion and tells of the love in his heart for his fellow men; then they go back home and the same old intolerant spirit asserts itself in their community life; the same old hatreds persist

and they are unable to put into operation any of the high-sounding resolutions that they have agreed upon at the conference. Frankly, I do not see how religion can be utilized to persuade men to tell the truth about actual world conditions and the things that make war a perpetual menace. I think it is worth trying but this is one of the greatest difficulties.

Religion, if it amounts to anything, according to Gandhi, must express itself ultimately in some form of action. You cannot be religious and fail to live the religious life. When it came to a discussion of the practical problems of peace, Gandhi was very emphatic, saying,

India is groaning to-day under the burden put upon her by the West, and no plan for peace will ever succeed except as it is grounded in international justice. This alone can make it possible. It is the West that makes war; the West has subjugated the rest of the world to its will and to its uses. A large proportion of the riches of the West come from the toil and misery of the East. Yes, let us seek peace. By all means let us attempt to bring the religions into co-operation with each other, but let us be honest and start in the right place by realizing that although peace is much better than war, nothing can be accomplished until the causes of war are removed.

Professor Wadia of Bombay, a distinguished economist, is also a recognized leader among the Parsis. He is a man of very strong opinions and a close friend of Gandhi, following his principles to the bitter end, although he does not attempt Gandhi's method of life. I asked him if he believed that the only way out of the present situation was through struggle and war, and he at once said "No!"—that he believed more could be done by conciliation and through conference than any other way. I then asked him if he thought it possible to confer if you could not take into conference people with whom you disagreed and even some of them that you may not like personally. In other words, is it not necessary to have the other side presented? He conceded this, but rather reluctantly, I thought. Then he said what I was to hear over and over again: "There is no use in attempting to approach the East on the question of peace and war unless you make social, racial, economic, and political justice the very basis of your discussions."

Doctor Tagore represents a different type of thought from Gandhi. He has nothing of the ascetic about him, but in his opinion on peace and war he agreed with Gandhi. I sat with him in the office of his school at Santiniketan, which is located about three hundred miles from Calcutta, and when I asked him if he thought that a religious peace conference would be a success he replied:

Every move of this kind is worth while, but when you talk peace in the East,

you must talk it not in the terms of the *status quo*. You will find in the East profound and deep-seated suspicion of any Westerner or any Western group that discusses peace. I regret to say it, but it is a fact that we in the East have lost our respect and confidence in the West. There was a time when no matter what an Englishman or an American said or did, we believed him, and were willing to follow him. That day has passed and to-day we see the Westerner for what he is; a liar when he deals in diplomacy, a cheat in business, and we have no confidence in his promises or his protests of friendship. Of course there are exceptions. I am not talking of the individual Englishman or American, nor of the individual Indian, but of the East as it finds the West. The League of Nations we look upon as an abomination; it is dominated by Imperialistic Powers and its whole interest is one of self-protection for those powers that were the conquerors in the last war. If peace is to be based on the *status quo*, we want nothing to do with it. If, on the other hand, one thousand religious leaders, East and West, will come together and frankly face the facts as they exist in the world to-day, will take measure of the injustices and frightful exploitations that are going on throughout the world and will seek means for curing them, then a new day will dawn for humanity and a new hope would be born in the East. If it can be done, it will be a big thing and it is well worth trying.

Among the Jains religion is so completely an individual matter that it is difficult to find any leader who will definitely state a program. The central doctrine of Jainism is "Ahimsa," which translated in Western terms means "Kindness," but with the extension of the idea until it includes every living thing. By the very force of logic, every Jain is against war and for peace. Mr. C. R. Jain said:

The horrible World War ended some eight years ago but as yet we have seen nothing of the peace we fought so furiously to secure. On the contrary, the atmosphere is as hostile to peace to-day as it was when the war came. We still have the same old ideals, the same lust for power and acquisition, the same unhealthy rivalries between nations that had turned the world into so many armed encampments. There is no change in the angle of vision of the statesmen of the great nations. There is no slackening of the rush for armaments and the cult of destructive power; in short, the war that was fought out has completely failed in its purpose if it did really aim at securing peace. Distrust is the prevailing note of our political life to-day and it is this distrust which must sooner or later lead us into war again with our neighbors. This distrust is fully justified by experience, for we have learned the bitter lesson that political promises are grounded not upon conscience and honesty of purpose, but upon mere considerations of national convenience and advantage. The only way out is through the consecration of each individual in all the religions to a life of love, for after all it is only as the individual learns this great lesson that peace will be made possible.

Among the Sikhs, Professor Teja Singh, head of the history department at Kalsa College, Amritsar, is a leader, highly respected because of his culture and learning and loved because of his charming character. When I discussed with him the question of religion as a force for peace he told me



that the Sikh religion is based on a theory of ethical conduct that inevitably would lead to peaceful relations between the nations if it were adopted.

Outwardly the Sikh religion is war-like. Every member of the community enters it, not by birth but by baptism, and this ceremony is performed by a selected group of the members of the community standing about a pool of water in which the ceremony is to be performed. One of them holds a naked two-edged sword hilt down in the water and another sprinkles the water on the head of the one who is being baptized. From that time on he must devote himself to a positively active life in behalf of the principles which form the basis of the community. Religion is thus so much a part of our common lives that we cannot think of the Sikh nation except as a religious community. We are for peace and will join with any group that will seek it on the basis of right relationship between races, nations, and groups.

Early one bright Sunday morning I climbed, barefooted, the long stairs leading to the main shrine of the Shwedagon Pagoda and met there the board of trustees of this temple, which holds first place not only in Burma but among the Buddhists all over the world. Set high on a hill, its golden spire is the first sight you see as you enter the Irrawaddy River in your approach to Rangoon. There were nine of the trustees present, all sitting barefooted upon the floor of their conference room. I was introduced by the chairman and was courteously greeted. Seated with the group I told them that I was trying to learn the peace attitude of the leaders of the various religions. They said:

Of course Great Britain, America, and the other victorious powers desire permanent peace now that they have won what they want. It is only through continued peace that they can hold their gains.

Then they launched into a discussion of the *status quo* and were sure that on that basis no good could be accomplished.

Buddhism is essentially a religion of peace. No Buddhist can properly take part in war without abandoning his faith, but what can we do? We are faced with a serious dilemma. Can we keep our faith in face of what is happening? Great Britain has fortified a part of the hill on which the Shwedagon Pagoda stands and uses it as a fort. How can we reconcile preparations for war with our religion, and how can we feel that a Western nation which so thoroughly disregards our religious principles is sincere in proposing that Buddhism join with the religions of the West in seeking to establish international peace?

At the end of the conference, which lasted almost two hours, the chairman made this significant statement:

In working for peace the other religions may count on us. We will do all we can, but you must remember that we of Burma are a subjugated people.

Among the most important of the world religions is the Muslim faith.

The very word "Islam" signifies the making of peace. A Muslim is one who makes peace. I approached Doctor Ansare, who is in many respects the foremost leader among the Muslims of India. He feels that religion as a mere outward form has lost much of its power and that one of the weaknesses of the Indian and Indian character is that the people are "overly religious." "If the religions, as such, could find some great motive like a passion to establish world peace, they probably would be able to create a new enthusiasm that would have in it the elements of self-regeneration."

Mr. A. Yusuf Ali, another Indian leader, points out that "the God idea in every religion expresses in itself the highest ambition of its followers and shapes their outlook on contemporary affairs."

President Hussein and the Grand Mufti in Jerusalem, as well as the Rector of El Azar University in Cairo, all agree that the religion of Islam is nothing if one fails to recognize that its foremost principle is a supreme devotion to the peace and prosperity of the whole human race.

Another Mussalman quotes this prayer as indicating the attitude of the faith toward international peace: "Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Allah, the Evolver of the destiny of all the nations, and the evolution of the destiny of humanity is possible only when there is peace and harmony among the nations."

With these principles stated and recognized, Doctor Ansare, Yusuf Ali, and the others with whom I have discussed the question, have expressed willingness to meet with the representatives of other faiths in a world-wide co-operative action to make a program for peace that will fit the high ideals expressed by the Muslim faith.

In China I found among the religious leaders a great deal of pessimism. Professor Hu Shih declared that religion was never at as low an ebb and had so little authority as to-day. As to the possibility of religion being a real force in bringing about world peace, he said:

Christianity is not a religion; it is simply a social system. The missionaries who are here in China are doing nothing but lead in education and social service. It is splendid work they are doing, simply because they know that the system they represent is not a religious system but is based on certain materialistic principles which have proven in the West to be the ones that have yielded the greatest good to the greatest number of people. Other religions in China are turning the same way. Confucianism amounts to nothing. Buddhism is a pleasant anodyne for the sick. Taoism is the real religion of China.

Hu Shih's deduction in all of this is that we have a long way to go if we are to get anywhere along the roads opened up by religion and religious leaders. However, he agreed that there was, in the hearts of all the people,

something that could be appealed to, and he thought that if religions as such would drop their nonessentials and combine in a practical program, there might be evolved a new spirit that would help the world. Many people would not consider Hu Shih a real religious leader, but among the educated youth of China he is exercising a wide influence and his appeal is always based on moral, ethical, and religious principles.

At the opposite extreme is Dr. Chen Huan Chang, head of the Confucian College in Peiping. He is enthusiastic in his belief that the old principles which have guided China so long are the principles that may be participated in by the other religions of the world, and that they will become the power to lead the people along the path into a new and warless world.

In June, 1931, there was held in Tokyo a peace conference in which all the religions of Japan participated on a basis of absolute equality. The resolutions passed were most significant. This declaration is the composite of the opinions of such men as Professor Anesaki, Doctor Tomoeda, Archbishop Shinkyo Michishige and the Rev. K. Matsuno, together with other leaders:

The League of Nations and the Treaty for the Renunciation of War should not be matters to be left in the hands of the politicians and diplomats only. We recognize at the bottom of them the great and profound religious spirit working actively. If all religionists in the world co-operate and do their utmost, then our ideal of a warless world will not only exist in our religious faith but also it will become a matter of practical international affairs. It is our opinion that religionists should assume responsibility for the frequent occurrence of war; should recognize that the moral law governs international as well as personal relations; that true patriotism is at one with true internationalism; that true peace should be in accordance with justice and good will; that all kinds of international disputes should be settled by peaceful methods.

In summing up the opinions of the religious leaders of the East, it will be seen that in all of these faiths there is explicitly stated, or implied, a principle that is diametrically and unalterably opposed to war and the war system. For a believer in any one of these faiths to engage in war is to deny the very essentials of his religion.

Judaism stands midway between the religions of the East and those of the West. In many features it still retains characteristics of the Eastern religion, but in other ways has readily assimilated the color and culture of the West. Rabbi Rubinstein, of Vilna, Poland, an outstanding representative of Judaism, said: "Religion must inevitably put itself on the side of the constructive forces that make for peace. The religious life of man is

always apart from political action, and yet, inspired by his religion, the teacher, the rabbi, the preacher, must take his full share of responsibility for political and social conditions." These statements are especially significant because Rubinstein, besides being a prominent Polish rabbi, is also a state senator. On the question of peace he believes that religion can function but that each religion will be strongest in keeping to its own sphere, and maintaining its own identity. He was not willing to venture any suggestion upon world affairs, and contents himself with the feeling that religion's greatest contribution will be in molding the character of individuals and inspiring them to work in their own sphere for the redemption of the world from the ways of war and convert them to the support of the League of Nations and other agencies that will establish and make permanent world peace.

When you turn from the East to the West and attempt to make a composite picture of the ideals of the European religious leaders in regard to the question of war and peace, you find at once a great difference between them and their opinions and those we are accustomed to in America. I think it is fair to say that the European church leaders take themselves more seriously than do the same group in America. It is a common saying that the Europeans do more thinking than the Americans. At the Stockholm Conference, for instance, one of the critics said, "The Germans are all head and the Americans all feet." Whether or not this is true (it was said by a German as a delicate compliment to the German theologians), it is undoubtedly true that the European church leaders are given more opportunity to think and write and they undoubtedly make use of their opportunities. In America, the successful pastor is an executive, a speaker, a mixer, a public man, and if he has any time left, he will do some thinking.

Intensive and cloistered thought develops individuality and such a diversity of opinion is held by the churchmen of Europe that it is misleading to label any opinion or conviction as being the accepted thought of a group. For instance, in Germany two men who stand poles apart, like Professor Rudolf Otto and Professor Karl Barth, take opposite views on political questions. Otto is a liberal in theology, and conservative in politics and economics; on the other hand, Barth is much of a pietist, yet he and many of his followers have a very warm sympathy for socialism.

The same is true in England. Bishop Gore's conception of the church excluded from the communion a large proportion of his associates, but at the same time his political and economic theories brought him into the closest possible relationship with all types and manner of men. At a Meth-

odist prayer meeting held in a Methodist chapel he would have been thoroughly uncomfortable, while at a labor union meeting he would have felt completely at home. In France one finds logic, for there a radical is a radical to the core, and at the same time a conservative in religion will naturally vote the conservative ticket in every election. Therefore, to get a fair view of the general ideal of peace and war as held by European church leaders, I sought an interview with a number of outstanding men representing the different nations and have selected three—one from Germany, one from France, and one from England—Professor Arthur Titius of the University of Berlin; Professor Wilfred Monod, of the University of Paris, and preacher in the Church of the Oratoire; and the Rt. Rev. Lord Bishop of Winchester, Dr. Frank Theodore Woods. The bishop has since died, much to the loss of all Christians. The opinions given me by these men I think represent most nearly the common opinion of the forward-looking church groups in Europe.

Professor Titius is one of the best-known and best-loved leaders in the church of Germany. In appearance he reminds one of the pictures of Carlyle. The late Archbishop of Upsala said of him: "He has the face of a lion but the heart of a lamb." His book, *God and Nature*, is an enormous volume. One of his friends in Berlin described it as "a compendium of general information from the creation of the world to the construction of modern airplanes." A student of economics, his opinions always bear the imprint of reality, and at the same time he is an idealist. His grim determination and tenacity of purpose shows itself in every debate, but his profound sense of humor saves him from becoming tedious. He visited America two years ago and gave a course of lectures in Chicago. When I met him for the first time in 1925 he was able to speak only a few words of English. Two years ago he surprised us all at a meeting in Switzerland by making a speech in English—and good English too. When I complimented him upon his achievement, he said: "I want to talk to my American friends; they will not learn German, so I must learn English." When I asked him what he thought religion could do to prevent war, Doctor Titius replied:

The aim of religion, and of the Christian religion in particular, is not primarily the ordering of the world but the establishment of communion between God and man; but it is impossible for religion not to contribute, by virtue of its innermost nature and its very existence, toward the stabilization of world peace. The moral responsibility of the religious community for the preservation of peace appears as an inevitable duty. This responsibility rests not only with Christianity as a whole and in general; every national, local, or denominational group has a specific duty



to educate its members toward brotherly fellowship and justice, and thus to further good will and peace among the nations. The most effective means for realizing this end is for the churches to come out of their isolation and to enter upon common world-wide work, led by one common inspiration.

I then asked him if he thought the church should put itself on record as refusing to sanction or support any future war. In reply to this question he said:

For the church not to sanction a war declared by the home government appears to be a proposition applicable or adequate only in very exceptional cases. No church would seem to be justified in binding, by a simple majority vote of a Synod or Episcopal College, the conscience of members holding a differing view. Public law and the political independence of the nations have their own God-given and divinely ordered sphere, in regard to which ethical and religious principles, if not accompanied by close and accurate knowledge of pertinent facts, will only create confusion. The church is likely to do far more effective peace work in such a case if it exerts its influence in the direction of an unbiased and impassionate investigation of the case and the full application of all peaceful means for settlement—to do so is, indeed, the sacred duty of the church.

The prospects of world peace as seen from the German point of view can be judged only with great reserve. The practically complete disarmament of a great nation right in the heart of Europe, which threatens to make it the toy of ill-feeling neighbors, the status of outlawry by virtue of the so-called peace treaty brutally forced upon this nation, the exhaustion of the country and people through unheard of "reparations," the progressive pauperization of the artisan and middle classes generally under the pressure of unemployment, that recedes even during the high business season only imperceptibly—all this has created an almost unbearable tension, which if it comes to explode will mean catastrophe. But peace will certainly be kept on the part of Germany, especially if a "way out," some worth-while goal, can be held out to the forces that now are paralyzed.

The United States, being a country that is fortunate enough to have comparatively few international danger spots, could easily become a mighty power for peace if she would resolve to give up her over-isolation. It may be pointed out that America is not wholly without responsibility for the present state of world affairs. America, by entering the war, made the defeat of the central powers inevitable, while in the reconstruction of Europe she has exerted only a very limited influence. Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points are to this day a far-off goal of justice. At any rate, it is impossible to see how, without the wholehearted moral and economic support of the United States, the political and economic situation in Central and Eastern Europe can be made such as to reconcile the peoples with it, by making it possible for them to live and to co-operate in the common task of human civilization.

Turning from Germany to France I sought out Professor Wilfred Monod. For more than a dozen years of rather intimate contact I have had a growing sense of his superior leadership and extraordinary range of knowledge. He is one of the outstanding figures in French Protestantism. There are not many Protestants in France but they wield an influence far



beyond their numerical strength. Someone has said: "To appreciate French Protestantism you must weigh it, not count it." Professor Monod is an indefatigable worker. Besides his lectures and responsibilities to the faculty of the University of Paris, he is one of the most popular preachers in Paris. He is eloquent and at the same time with his eloquence, what is most unusual, he is accurate in statement and profound in judgment. An admirer of his told me, with something of awe in his voice, just before I left Paris, that Professor Monod had now finished his book on theology. "It will be a book of some eight hundred pages," and he added with a touch of French humor, "It will probably be the most complete biography of God published in our day."

When I presented my questions to Professor Monod, he said:

Yes, I will give you my responses. They are very frank, too frank perhaps. Too much may be expected of religion in itself. It is at bottom merely one of the characteristics of human beings who are by nature "religious animals." But this characteristic, like all other instincts, needs to be vigorously evangelized, without which it is merely a superstition or a fanaticism which may express itself in violence. The disciples of Jesus thought of their faith not in terms of religion but in terms of the good tidings. Christianity has been poisoned since the time of Constantine by the pagan error that the state and the church are officially one. Since that day the state and the church have been in one pot and under one cover. *C'est une marmite et son couvercle.*

No other society here below is as qualified as the church to bring about world peace. If another war breaks out public opinion throughout the world will not pardon the organized church its incapacity to do the thing that it knows ought to be done, its ignorance and its cowardice. The Lord's Prayer begins with a credo, "our Father," and goes on to a program, "our bread." "Our Father" puts us on religious ground, and "our bread" on economic ground. These, taken together, make "our peace" in the field of politics. Next in order is the Holy Communion, and really the communion table is a common table where all partake together of the Holy Sacrament. What more can one say than this as to the basis of the church's responsibility, founded upon its most sacred faith and its most holy rite?

At the Conference at Prague in 1928 I demanded that the body assembled have the moral courage and sincerity to affirm "that from that time forward in the framework of the family of nations the dogma of the absolute sovereignty of each state is nothing more than a fiction, illogical and out-of-date." I was not able to obtain the insertion of a clause of this kind in the "order of the day" voted by the assembly. The French delegation, nevertheless, kept this all-important affirmation in its private text of the resolution.

When I asked Professor Monod, "Do you believe that the church should put itself on record as refusing to sanction or support any future war?" he replied: "It is difficult to make a categorical answer to such a question." He does not believe that the use of force in and of itself is an evil. In fact he believes that there must be established an international police

force and that upon occasion it may be necessary for this police force to be used against some state to compel it to observe its international obligations. He called my attention to a speech that he made at the Stockholm Conference in 1925, in which he affirmed that while the churches should remain loyal to the state and its institutions so long as the state maintains an upright attitude in its dealings with its neighbors, they should refuse to continue as the humble and obedient servant of a government which declares a war against a neighbor without previously seeking by every means to avert such action. Should such an occasion arise, the action of the churches will be weighed in the "balances of Christ." The idea that Doctor Monod expresses here was formulated in a resolution by the Bishop of Chichester and presented to the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work at its meeting at Eisenach in 1929. This resolution was signed by Doctor Simons, formerly president of the German Republic, and by Doctor Monod, and states the position of the churches in these emphatic words: "We earnestly appeal to the respective authorities of all Christian communions to declare in unmistakable terms that they will not countenance nor assist in any way in any war with regard to which the government of their country has refused a bona fide offer to submit the dispute to arbitration." This resolution was later passed by the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches, and at a still later date was adopted in full by the Lambeth Conference.

"The greatest guarantee for the peace of the world is to organize vigorously, as has been proposed, a strong understanding among all the churches, and if possible among all the religions of the world for the purpose of securing—based upon moral and mystical as well as practical considerations—a world agreement analogous to the Paris Pact, which binds the governments on the basis of politics."

When I asked him if he believes in the League of Nations and the World Court, he countered by asking me if I believe in lifeboats and fire engines. "Of course, no sensible person would take any other position." On the prospects for peace he was quite positive, saying:

If war again menaces the world I am sure that it will be the Anglo-Saxon people who will take a serious responsibility in the affair. On the one hand, the United States has weakened the League of Nations, which owes its being to the noble initiative of an American, by abstaining from taking its place in the League; on the other hand, Great Britain refused to sanction the protocol elaborated at Geneva, against the perils of war, and has seriously retarded general disarmament. A nation which hesitates to bind itself morally by precise engagements hinders the application of the law for the settlement of international disputes and throws its neighbors back upon

a recourse to war. Law puts an end to the rule of one's own sweet will, and in the kingdom of God a disciple of Jesus Christ binds himself voluntarily to free the slave brothers. Christianity might take for its motto these words: "We bind ourselves that others may be set free." Until the nations of the world are willing to enter into some kind of larger agreement, bind themselves to certain definite principles, there will be no great progress toward peace.

This is the best possible expression of what the French really mean when they talk about security. France does not want, except as a last alternative, security based on bayonets, guns, and forts, but she does want security based on international agreements and the sanctity of contracts between the Powers. The heart of France is for peace, but she has suffered so much from war and has been disillusioned so many times that now, having secured herself by means of an armament adequate for her needs, she is demanding that if she gives up that security she have a guarantee from the other nations that they will co-operate wholeheartedly and loyally through the League of Nations and the World Court for the pacific settlement of all disputes that may arise in the future.

The Bishop of Winchester was one of the ablest men in the Anglican Church. He wrote books, preached good sermons, and was much sought after as a speaker on important occasions; was frequently heard over the radio, but beyond all of these activities he was known as a man of affairs. He was an efficient administrator and got things done. He was the Secretary of the Lambeth Conference and prepared for that great world gathering; was the secretary of the commission which made the revision of the Anglican Prayer Book; was associated with the Life and Work Movement from its very beginning, and took a part in all national and international interests that look toward the peace of the world. The bishop had a charm that was contagious. He was a most delightful companion, and while one did not fail to realize his strength and spirit of determination which led him through all difficulties straight to the goal of his endeavor, at the same time he did not allow the pressure of outside interests to spoil his spirits or cloud his hopeful outlook on life. He knew better than most how serious the world situation really is, but in attempting to measure it believed that one can apply the yardstick better in the light than in the midst of the fog of pessimism. In response to my question, "What contribution do you think religion can make toward world peace?" he said:

I think its contribution is quite clear, for it alone can produce that passion for peace without which incentive the statesmen and politicians will not move effectively. The church's responsibility, however, goes further than this; for on her attitude to peace depends in large measure the respect, to say nothing of the adherence, of the

multitudes, particularly the multitudes of young people, who will judge her sincerity largely by this test. In other words, if the church desires a hearing from the younger generation for her gospel, she must needs be a fearless propagator of the teaching of her Lord and Master in this as in other great questions of human life.

This responsibility can be discharged by evangelistic efforts in all countries in behalf of peace; by church members who are in touch with public bodies and with governments, using their influence to the utmost in its behalf; and by discussion of the subject at meetings of convocations and councils of the church. Broadly speaking, the nations have to be persuaded that the only ultimate security lies not in armaments nor in counting heads but in good will.

As to the church's support of any future war, I should take the line adopted in the Lambeth Conference Resolutions. (This is exactly the same statement made by Professor Monod, together with the identical quotation.)

He continued: As to the League of Nations, there is need in this country for a warmer support of it, particularly in church circles. Even in Christian minds the war mentality lingers long, and people are not easily persuaded that the time has come when either the world will slip down into the abyss of mutual destruction or must step up onto a new plane of international life.

What are your hopes as to world peace? I asked.

I think the situation is serious and raises much anxiety, though it is not, perhaps, alarming. So far, Britain has led the way in the reduction of armaments, but unless this project is taken more seriously by other countries, the prospect is not encouraging. One can sympathize with the rivalry between France and Germany and appreciate the points of view of both countries which are not easily shared by people like ourselves, who have no land frontiers which march directly with other countries. On the other hand, it is obvious that war can never be a solution and that Christian people in these countries, like others, are called upon to diffuse a new atmosphere of mutual faith and mutual trust.

As to the attitude of the United States, I think that she can make a contribution to world peace, perhaps more vital than that of any other country, but this in my judgment must involve a willingness on the part of much larger numbers of her people to take a greater interest in the affairs of Europe, and to realize in these days of world-wide communications that an attitude of aloofness is not only not possible but is even dangerous. The world is now one city; in the streets of it are the nations; and the supremé hope of humanity lies in that super-patriotism which regards the loyalty due to each country as merged in the still greater loyalty due to the still greater human family of God.

The Bishop of Chichester takes a very strong position in regard to what the churches ought to do in these days of stress. He feels that the whole responsibility for peace and war in the future lies heavily upon the conscience of Christian men and women.

In preparation for the Geneva Disarmament Conference, the Archbishop of Canterbury preached a striking sermon. Not only are the churchmen of England thinking peace, but they are willing to be numbered as pacifists. A great peace parade in behalf of disarmament was organized after a religious ceremony. Services were held in the City Temple, a free-

church meeting house, and from there the clergy in their robes, together with the people, marched to Westminster Abbey, where another service was held. Prayers have been offered daily in the churches for the success of the conference, and a great mass meeting held in Albert Hall gave opportunity for the outstanding churchmen of the kingdom to put themselves on record as favoring drastic reduction of armaments.

One may very properly ask in concluding this cursory survey of the peace opinions of the religious leaders of the world, "What is the consensus of opinion?" It is undoubtedly true that the East is in a pessimistic mood. I have heard dozens of religious leaders east of Suez say that their old religious philosophy is wrong and that it must be abandoned. They have tried the way of peace for thousands of years and now nothing is left but armed conflict.

On the other hand, not one teacher or preacher or professor or adherent of any faith with whom I talked but was willing to agree that unless a way can be found to establish peace, the present forms of religion will disappear and the world will lapse into an era of materialistic savagery.

The heaviest responsibility lies upon the shoulders of the Christian world. It is here that the struggle against arms and armed conflict must be carried on. Doctor Anesaki emphasized this point when he said: "It is the example of Western Christianity that is the greatest stumbling block to the progress of peace idealism in Japan to-day." And Hu Shih in Shanghai pointed to the twenty-six warships of the Christian nations then facing the Bund, and said: "Those are the ugly machines that are teaching the futility of religious idealism to China."

The injustices under which the East is groaning are largely those perpetuated by the West. Peace in Europe is uncertain because the nations lack the spirit to do what their own reason teaches them must be done. Peace must not remain simply a sentiment in the heart. It must be made real in the minds of men and women, but must also be organized on a world scale. Can Christianity fulfill the demands that are made upon it to-day? The East has been awakened to its new hope by the teaching of economic, educational, social, and religious ideals through Christian Missions. Will Christianity be true to itself? This is the most serious question it has to answer, and Christianity in America must do its full part if we are to build a world structure of lasting peace.



# Literature and Life

EDWARD SHILLITO

IT must be admitted that there is a widespread belief in the unreality of literature; things written are sharply separated from things done, as make-believe is from the real thing. For many, literature is divorced from life. It belongs to a world of shadows. In his poem, Tennyson describes how the Lady of Shalott saw the moving pageant of the world only in the mirror, and how in the end she found the condition intolerable:

"Or when the moon was overhead  
Came two young lovers lately wed,  
'I am half-sick of shadows,' said  
The Lady of Shalott."

The life of the literary man or even of the bookish man is understood to be like the life of the Lady of Shalott. Only in the mirror is there the vision of this human scene, and small wonder that the man of letters grows "half-sick of shadows!"

But it is not the men of action who have pointed out most clearly the peril of unreality in literature. It is rather the masters in this realm who have issued the most urgent warnings against idle words. They know the peril in themselves, and therefore they have no mercy upon it. The literary person is in constant danger of using words which he does not mean to press into action. Such men have never been more mercilessly dissected than by Newman, himself a master of almost every literary gift. The world, as he adds, listens to such a literary person indulgently; he is permitted to say strong things, because nobody expects him to do anything. Newman once preached a sermon upon *Idle Words*, and it is known that lives were changed, as they well might be, by that sermon. Idle words are words which are unreal and divorced from life, because they are not meant to be taken as a ground of action. They are, as Coleridge said,

"bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul."

But Newman is not the only witness to be called. Saint Paul was never more emphatic than when he declared that he had no trust in the plausible words of man's wisdom. He knew how the written word might become a make-believe and no less how it might glow with the fire of the Holy Ghost. Pascal showed the literary men no mercy; with the insight of a physician he traced out in their work all the symptoms of egoism and vanity. It may

even be claimed that those who have known best how much the written word can do, know also how easily it may be perverted.

It is even common to discover in the man of letters a whole-hearted admiration not of his own class but of the man of action. Sir James Barrie takes delight in the praise of the life of adventure: such men as Scott, the explorer, are his heroes. Robert Louis Stevenson confessed that he had done some pretty work in his time, but his mind went back regretfully to the career of his fathers, who had built lighthouses. If only he could have built a lighthouse, as well as write *The Master of Ballantrae!* Little is known of Shakespeare's mind, but it seems clear that he took more pride in being a successful stage-manager than in the writing of his plays. This admiration shows how vividly the man of letters is aware of the peril there is in the separation of literature from life. He can understand the plain man's attitude when he asks of a man of letters, "What has he *done?*"

The suspicion of the plain man is right in part. There *are* books which can be contrasted with deeds. They are only idle words; they are simply the work of vain and insincere minds; and the honest man, who says after he has read a little in them, "Enough of this tomfoolery!" is right; and all the great men of letters would support him.

It is as true of the reader as of the writer that he may escape from life while he reads. But if he so reads he is a deserter. His mind becomes a poisonous marsh instead of a fruitful land. He loses the clue to the mind of the great writers; they can only give to those who are ready to receive; they can only answer those who put the right questions. They have nothing for those who turn to books as a way of escape from the business of life. It is possible not only to write idle words but in reading to turn words which are life-giving to others into futility for ourselves. Books may be real to the author and unreal to the reader. Everything depends upon the spirit in which the reader approaches this sacrament of words.

It holds true of this great human concern, literature, that its gains are set before men accompanied by great hazards. The higher man rises the more fearful is the fall which he risks. We can say of this realm as it was once said of the Celestial City that there is quite near to its gates a road to hell. Literature may be, in the Apostle's words, "a saviour unto life, and of death unto death."

When the danger is admitted, at the same time it must be added that in the present age the value of literature for human life is in danger of being forgotten. It is a common belief that in the present age men read more than they ever did. Certainly a greater proportion of the inhabitants

of the Western world *can* read than in any previous time. We are literate; we can be reached by the written word; never were so many books printed and sold; but it is doubtful whether we "gird up the loins of our mind" to read the great books. Few preachers will contend that their hearers read the Bible as often or as carefully as their fathers did; but do they give to their Shakespeare or Milton the time which they save from their Bible? It is impossible for any one observer to do more than give his general impressions, but so far as the present writer's observations go, he has no doubt whatever that there is less serious reading than there was a generation ago. If we do not read our Bible as once we did, it is also true that we do not read our Shakespeare or our Milton as our fathers did; and the habit of reading is not so much one to be preserved as one to be recovered. And because we have lost it, we have lost not a diversion or a recreation but a sacrament in taking which we receive fresh insight and courage and hope, and live a more full and abundant life.

Literature need not be divorced from life. It can indeed become a separate province into which the reader retreats from the cares of this present life. It can even become a mirage with which the writer and the reader "pretend," as children say. It need not be so debased, but in order to see how it is rightly related it is necessary to consider some things which are essential to life, and to see how literature puts them within our reach.

Life as we know it is a continuous process. We suddenly find ourselves on the wings of the stage; and we hear our call to enter into the action. We have no great warning. How are we to discover *what it is all about*? Who can preserve for us the previous action of the drama, tragedy, or comedy into which we enter?

Clearly it can never be understood by a study of one brief moment in one brief age. The pattern cannot be read in one infinitesimal piece of the ribbon which is unfolded. The past must be called to the aid of the present age. But how are we to gather up the gains of the former ages or how are we to profit by its errors and follies? There are many ways in which literature is bound up with living, but in nothing is our debt to it so great as for this service; *it is a means whereby the spirit of man receives the revenues of the ages; it gives the initiation by means of which the new player in the drama knows what has been said and done before he receives his call.*

The past lives on in many memorials. The artist impresses his own mind with all that it has seen and heard upon some material thing, and through his craftsmanship the dead past is no longer dead. Every art has its appropriate material by means of which the artist, who is the maker,

shares with all who see or hear his immortal hour. But there can be no material for an artist so universal as words. Few can ever hope to see the Parthenon in Athens or the Taj Mahal. Only seldom can we hear the songs in which the ages tell their secrets. Words written are the most accessible of all sacraments. There can be no other guide so ready, and so swiftly at our call when we wish to enter into the life of the ages which have been before us.

When the last man who remembers a great historic moment is dead, that moment can still be recovered. Some word arrests a movement and makes it ours forever; and we hold converse by means of such words with all the generations of mankind. Not long ago an American lady died, who remembered the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg. The time cannot be far when no one is left who can say, "I saw with my eyes, I heard with my own ears" the words of Lincoln. But because these words have the imperishable quality of pure literature they hand on to all after generations that historic scene. The words of that speech are literature because the thought and the words are so intertwined that they can never be considered apart. This is the quality which distinguishes literature from other written matter. Once written, the word stands. In this way the scene at Gettysburg is a permanent possession not only of the American people but of mankind.

If literature can do this for a historic scene, it can do it no less for all the memories of mankind and for all the levels of human life. It is true that no modern student has access to ranges of human life which was lived before the written word was known. The archæologist discovers his flints or arrow-heads; or perhaps he lights with bewilderment and wonder upon the artistic drawings made by primitive man in his cave. Man lived long before he could express himself in the symbols of writing; but for any deep and satisfying account of the spirit of man, in its long history, for any draft upon his memories, we have to trust largely to literature.

There are many levels of life, and each one is taken up and fulfilled in the highest level of all upon which man stands forth as a spiritual being. And it is to the task of carrying down the memories of this spiritual man that literature is dedicated. Its chief theme is not the world beyond the region of time and space, which must needs be deferred in our experience, but the spiritual life of man as it is conditioned by the present setting of his life. It is not man as a disembodied spirit but man as a spirit housed with a body, winning himself on the material earth. He is a physical being, but not therefore inseparable from the sub-human creature; he is a physical

being, whose world may become full of sacraments and whose very physical life may be made a way into the unseen and eternal. Literature, in other words, if it is to convey to all ages the revenues of the past, must regard all things in a sacramental way. It must be true to earth, but in that loyalty it must express the spirit of man which is also "the candle of the Lord."

It is with man in this interpretation of him that literature deals when it rises to the height of its calling; with man whose

"faculties can comprehend  
The wondrous architecture of the world,  
And measure ev'ry wand'ring planet's course,  
Still striving after knowledge infinite  
And ever moving as the restless spheres."

This description of man, which seems to gather into it all that modern science aspires to do, is not from any modern poet and is not a picture of Einstein but from Christopher Marlowe, whose brief day fell in the Elizabethan age. It is indeed with the spirit of man so regarded that literature deals; and not only with him, as an insatiable adventurer seeks, but with him as he is sought by another.

They who begin to see that only by some such interpretation can sense be made of man's earthly life will seek to know whether others have shared with them this belief. They will rightly look for all evidence of this that may be recovered from the past. They will not scorn books which are bare chronicles with no pretense to literature. But they will rightly seek their witnesses first from the poets and other writers of imaginative power. The very gift of imagination makes writers bridge-makers between the children of men, who are often so pitifully insulated from each other. We do not read Homer to learn history as that is given in chronicles; what is Troy to us? But if we wish to discover the spiritual tradition of the past we shall not neglect that story. We cannot pretend to enter fully into the life of King David, but in his lament over Jonathan we have a way opened into the heart of man a thousand years before Christ:

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:  
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me;  
Thy love to me was wonderful,  
Passing the love of women."

What is there in these words which sets all the chords of our hearts trembling? Is there not here a voice, speaking in a language which does not



know the bounds of time and space? Literature it is of the purest kind, on the wings of which the old is made new, and the ages far away become intimately near.

They who declare that human nature does not change generally mean that since man fought with man in other ages he will still fight till the end of time. They are defending in the spirit of Machiavelli the belief that man will always trust to his own glittering sword and will never let any moral considerations delay him; he will help

"The good old rule, the simple plan,  
That he shall get who has the power,  
And he shall keep who can."

This is an assumption that can not be justified; it is rather one quality of human nature, *that it does change its ways*. But if it is meant that there is a common element in human life which makes us able in the present age to enter into the very heart of Andromache or King David or Job or the apostles of our Lord, then this is not a matter either to be denied or to be lamented. It is indeed a condition of faith in any religion which comes to mankind in history. If there is not something shared by the Galileans, who listened to Jesus, and ourselves, how can we call upon the same holy Name and enter into the Kingdom into which he called them? Of that common element the interpreters are the men of letters. They are able to deal with universal things; and to them we, the last-comers into the moving and solemn pageant, owe our knowledge of the dead, not as being of another age and clime but one with us in their love and sorrow, in their fear and hope, one with us beneath the hushed midnight and in the dews of morning, one in the call to live and one in the hour of death.

If we seek for the interpreters of the spirit of man in his dealings with his God we shall find how much we owe to the literature which is distinct from the mere writing of books. When we wish to know the very spirit of the Middle Ages we can find it nowhere so perfectly expressed as in Dante. Scholars read to their great profit the words of Saint Thomas Aquinas; these are admirable in their logic and precision. But for one who is able to enter by that way into the thought of the Middle Ages there are ten thousand who enter through *The Divine Comedy* of Dante. John Owen was a master of English as well as a learned theologian. But John Bunyan, a writer of imaginative power, is the chosen guide of an innumerable company into the innermost sanctuary of Puritanism. They will be recalling soon the beginning of the Oxford Movement in England; but

that Movement, rich in many of its devoted advocates, is interpreted in *The Christian Year*, by Keble, and best of all in the works of John Henry Newman. Newman has the indefinable gift which distinguishes literature and through his writings the very soul of that Movement still speaks. And not till a modern movement finds its literature, or rather its writer with this same gift, is it sure of perpetuation. Of all men the Christian teacher has the least reason to be neglectful of literature. It is directly related to the things by which he lives. Through it they are preserved for his own spiritual enrichment. When Saint Paul speaks of those upon whom the ends of the world have come, it is more than likely that the Greek means "to whom the revenues of the ages" have come. That is always our position; but how much of that we owe to the writers who have offered to their Lord their pens, and not without inspiration have handed on to others the secret of the Lord!

The Christian Church through its teachers should be eager to encourage reading and to guide readers. Among the many activities of the Christian churches working as they should do in concert, there might be a clinic for readers. In a city in which there are many ministers of religion one might surely be given this commission. The working out of such a policy need not occasion insuperable difficulties. But if ever the habit of serious reading is to be recovered, it will only be by those who see for themselves how literature and life are related and believe that what God has joined together man must not put asunder.

One story out of the records of the Oxford Movement may bring this plea to an end. When Keble was living in a small country parish he had with him for his pupil that fiery spirit, Richard Hurrell Froude. One day the tutor was seeing Froude off by the coach. Keble seemed to have something on his mind; at last he said, "Froude, the other day you said that you considered Law's *Serious Call* a clever book; it sounded exactly as if you had said that the Day of Judgment was a pretty sight." Froude, in other words, had not thought of that book as in any direct way related to life; Keble saw not a book but a rehearsal of the Day of Judgment; to him literature and life were not separable; and he was right.

# Karl Barth: Promise or Peril?

THEODORE F. HERMAN

THE theological movement inaugurated by Karl Barth is so young that its very name is still unfamiliar to many outside the cradle of its birth. Moreover, it differs so radically from every current type of theology that a correct interpretation and a fair evaluation of it present major difficulties even to the professional theologian.

But the inherent difficulties of Barthianism are fully matched by its importance. Since Schleiermacher and Ritschl, no theologian has appeared whose writings have created a commotion remotely comparable to the Barthian controversy. Due to him there is to-day a fluttering in every theological dovecote the world over. And a veritable deluge of controversial and constructive literature is inundating and refreshing the theological landscape that had become sterile under the cultivation of Modernism, and barren under the tillage of Fundamentalism.

"A plague upon both your houses," cries Karl Barth, this stormy petrel of theology. And, forthwith, he hales theologians of every type and stripe into his court of last appeal to show their spurious assets, their counterfeit theology, and to confess under duress their total bankruptcy and insolvency. He reaps admiration from many, especially in Central Europe, and repudiation from not a few. He has been hailed as a modern Augustine, and his opponents have called his theology all manner of bad names. But, whether you place Barth on a pedestal or in the pillory, you cannot ignore him. He is a significant sign of our times. He compels thoughtful men to reckon with his tremendous theism; to say yea or nay to it; and, if nay, to validate their dissent.

You cannot ignore Karl Barth because, in his own way, he sums up our age. He is an answer, one answer, to its bitter need of God and to its inarticulate cry for redemption. And his answer bears the mark of deep sincerity and great originality. Somehow it sounds like an echo of other times, older and happier for religion and theology than our distracted age. You may accept this Theology of Crisis or you may reject it, but you must needs reckon with it as being the most significant theological movement that has appeared since Schleiermacher.

The founder of the movement is, of course, Karl Barth, and his earliest supporters were Brunner, Gogarten, and Thurneysen. Barth was a young pastor of the Reformed Church in Switzerland, where, at the beginning of our century, Ragaz and Kutter exercised a profound influence as radical

critics of our so-called Christian civilization. Before them men like Stöcker and Naumann in Germany had preached a social Christianity. But none of this earlier group felt the inherent contradiction between the religion of Christ and a civilization based upon capitalistic industrialism and buttressed by nationalistic militarism. None of them sensed the social crisis confronting Christianity, which could not be averted by philanthropy or charity.

Then, at the turn of the century, a new group of social critics came into prominence, led by Ragaz and Kutter. The latter, a Swiss pastor, published his book, *They Must*, in 1904, which marked his abrupt repudiation of the liberal theology and of the church. He maintained that neither Christian idealism nor ecclesiastical orthodoxy properly represented Christianity. Only the "Social Democrats," godless skeptics and atheists, realized God's loving purpose, albeit unwittingly and unintentionally: *They Must!* Thus, these men saw behind and beneath the revolutionary movement of socialism a spiritual force working through human instrumentalities and seeking to establish a new social order. They realized that the social problem is not, primarily, the economic problem of the proletariat, but a religious problem of universal import, whose final solution requires nothing less than a radical transformation of our present culture and civilization. They claimed that the whole world, including organized Christendom, faced a momentous crisis in its culture. And they saw no help anywhere on earth, neither in the world nor in the church, to blaze the way from the present chaos to a new and better age. It is God alone who can build this city of mankind that hath the foundation, the God who has revealed his eternal purpose in Jesus Christ.

From this group of Christian radicals Barth derived the impulses and the inspiration that ultimately led to the formation of Barthianism. These initial impulses are clearly reflected in the first edition of his commentary on Romans, of which in subsequent editions (so Barth himself tells us) "not one stone remained upon another." That is to say, in 1919 Barth was in full accord with the Swiss radicals, who expected the establishment of God's kingdom not by evolution but by a divinely wrought revolution in the hearts of men. But he also believed in the present activity of this sovereign God in the world. Through Jesus Christ, God had lodged redemptive forces in the bosom of mankind. Accordingly his Kingdom was in progress of development. It is a transcendental kingdom in its foundation and consummation. To God alone belong both the initiative and the dynamic of its coming. Nevertheless the early Barth also recognized the historical and the human factors in its establishment. He found the essential message of Paul

in the declaration that in Christ the Eternal God had graciously entered into history and humanity, and was redemptively at work in the believer. But in the Theology of Crisis not a vestige remains of this moderate eschatology. In its later development it is decidedly antihumanistic and anti-social. But it is significant that originally it grew out of Barth's passionate interest in the social welfare of the masses.

If space permitted, one might fruitfully trace other lines of contact between Barth and certain kindred spirits whose influence is manifest in his growing thought. Kierkegaard, "the Pascal of Scandinavia," he quotes frequently and approvingly. From this Danish rebel against organized Christianity Barth derived some of the dominant conceptions of his system, especially his basic idea of the absolute contrast between the realm of eternity and the realm of time, "the endless qualitative difference between time and eternity." The Barthian emphasis in "existential thinking," stressed by all of his followers, also has its source in the writings of Kierkegaard. And by "*existentielles Denken*" the Barthians mean a sober, pragmatic analysis of human life as we actually find it in its relation to the cosmic reality. Not idealistic illusions about man's place and power in the cosmic scheme of things, but a sober recognition of man's nonentity and depravity. It is that kind of thinking, the Barthians claim, which opens our eyes to the "crisis" of our existence, and leads inevitably to the acceptance of the Theology of Crisis as the only alternative to despair. Dostojevsky may be mentioned, in passing, as another elective affinity of Barth. With the great Russian he holds that only our despair leads us to God. "Why," he asks, "can we work up no indignation against Dostojevsky's daring to make Christ pass as an idiot in society, and the real understanding of him begin with the murderer and the harlot?" The implied answer is that real Christianity and our modern culture have so little in common that its practice must needs seem "idiotic" to the cultured, and, again, that Sonia, the harlot, and her lover, pitiable and perverse outcasts of mankind, through their suffering and despair have a true and profound understanding of the religion of Jesus Christ.

Interrelations like these throw light on the Barthian movement, but they do not explain it. Some of its superficial critics have indeed dismissed it as a morbid manifestation of war-psychology, but such a shallow judgment merely reveals a total lack of insight into its origin and meaning. True, Barthianism reached its early adolescence, if not its maturity, during the Great War, the tragic judgment of history upon a faithless and foolish world. But that war merely made more acute the insight into the nature and needs of our present world culture that had been growing long before



the fateful year 1914. It helped to crystallize definitely and sharply the convictions that are basic in Barthianism, but it certainly did not originate them. The post-bellum mood of failure and frustration, the creeping paralysis of a pessimistic despair that fell upon Central Europe after the Treaty of Versailles does in a measure explain the sensational vogue of the movement among the multitude of disillusioned youths who found in the Theology of Crisis a last refuge of their shattered idealism. But that mood, more or less temporary and transient, does not at all explain the spell that Barthianism since 1919 has cast upon many of the leading theologians in Germany. It fails to account for its continued vigor and vitality in Central Europe, not to mention its spread into other lands.

Since the appearance of Barth's commentary on the Epistle to the Romans in 1919, which was the manifesto of this new theology, many of the younger German theologians have become his ardent disciples. Among them may be mentioned Bultmann, Heim, Knittermeyer, Kolfhaus, and Heinrich Barth, a brother of the founder, who is a professor of philosophy. These men and their associates wield fertile pens, and they also publish a quarterly journal, *Zwischen den Zeiten*. Only a few of their voluminous treatises have so far been translated into English. American students of Barthianism must derive their knowledge of it either from its English and American interpreters, who seem to vary greatly in their estimate of its meaning and value, or they must study the original German sources whose inner meaning often requires the gracious help of a *spiritus sancti internum*. That applies especially to Barth's somewhat ponderous style, and it may explain the frequent lament of devout Barthians that his critics aim their shafts at a "Zerrbild" of his system.

In its main features, however, Barthianism is easily grasped in spite of its baffling paradoxes and new vocabulary. But it can be properly understood only when viewed in its larger setting, as a prophetic voice crying into the turmoil and chaos of our modern world. Its background is the nineteenth century, both its culture and its theology. There the student must find the true causes of its rise and growth.

Now the outstanding phenomenon of European culture during the nineteenth century is its transition from the absolute to the relative in every significant aspect of its life. Gradually all the inherited intellectual, moral, and social values which hitherto had been considered as absolute and authoritative became relative and problematical. All the established objective norms in the political, social, and moral spheres were dissolved. Certitude gave place to doubt and denial. The cause of this unparalleled cultural

upheaval was mainly the marvelous growth of science, culminating in the conception of evolution as the creative principle of the universe. That in itself seemed to imply the relativity of every form and phase of life.

Inevitably the disintegrating tendencies of this period penetrated deeply into the sphere of theology and religion. There, too, relativism took the place of absolutism. History and psychology examined the objective truths of religion and dissolved them into subjective states of consciousness, whose roots were biological and whose changing forms were socially conditioned and controlled.

The result of these scientific investigations of religion was a new theology, liberal and even radical. It assumed various forms during a century of unresting labor, but in all of its forms it shared certain characteristics that set it apart from the surviving confessionism of the established churches of Germany. Free research in biblical and historical fields, faith in man's mental and moral ability to find truth, the immanence of God and his revelation in nature, history, and human personality, the unity of the universe in all its manifestations, harmony between reason and revelation, the ultimate reconciliation of science and religion—these were the characteristic principles and presuppositions of the modern theology that began with Schleiermacher and ran through the nineteenth century.

The outcome of it, of course, was an ever-growing humanization of religion. The old metaphysical supernaturalism and irrational sacramental mysticism were discarded. Instead of being an exotic from without and above this world, religion became an indigenous plant, native to the soul of man and flowering luxuriously in the soil of human history. The Jesus of the synoptic tradition took the place of the incarnate Logos of Saint John and of the Kurios of Saint Paul. And in the preaching of the gospel the emphasis fell on the moral and rational aspects of the Christian message.

It was Ritschl who first crystallized these general tendencies of the modern theology in a system that has been of extraordinary influence in shaping theological thought in every civilized land. Friend and foe alike are in his debt. Even Barth gratefully acknowledges that he began his career as a Ritschlian. Taking his departure squarely from the Christian experience of God in Christ, Ritschl eliminated all metaphysical judgments from theology. In the soul of Jesus, he claimed, the majesty of God's redeeming love reveals itself and lays hold on the human heart and conscience. This divine revelation is utterly unattainable by logical reflection, metaphysical speculation, or mystical contemplation. It is accessible to man only in the historical person of Christ. And the Christian religion

consists in humble trust and obedience to the divine reality disclosed in the inner life of Christ.

In the wake of this Ritschlian movement came another influential school, the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, so-called. Ritschl had isolated Christ from all historical relationships, making his spirit the vehicle of God's full and final revelation. According to him, the founder of our faith had no antecedents and no parallels anywhere. This new school attempted to correct the defective and arbitrary onesidedness of Ritschl by seeking the wider basis in the total life of mankind of God's continuous and progressive self-disclosure. The study of comparative religion yielded surprising results. Not merely the Jewish religion but also the early Christian faith was seen to be intimately connected with contemporary forms of religion. And the discovery of the unique and distinctive essence of the Christian religion became a burning question and a difficult task. The relation of faith and history now was as problematical as that of faith and reason in the Ritschlian system.

But under the leadership of Troeltsch men learned to interpret history as well as reason as a manifestation of the Universal Spirit. But the former absoluteness and sheer transcendency of Christianity had to be abandoned. The Christian religion was brought into close contact and organic relations with all the other religions of mankind and with cultural life in general. It was still regarded as the highest expression of the religious consciousness of our race, but it had lost its character as a wholly unique, transcendent revelation.

Mention must also be made of the "social-Christian" movement as the final symptom of the humanization of Christianity in the century after Schleiermacher. It was occasioned by the rising tide of socialism in Germanic countries and by the growing estrangement of the proletariat from organized Christianity. But its deeper motivation lay in religion itself. It formulated in thought and it expressed in action the social implications and obligations of the Christian faith.

And it was this "social-Christian" movement that held the early allegiance of Barth. He came from Marburg to his first parish in Switzerland imbued with the liberal theology of the Ritschlian W. Herrmann, his "unforgettable teacher." And he joined the group of Christian socialists led by Kutter and Ragaz, who were the passionate and radical critics of our social order and the fearless prophets of its reconstruction in accord with the principles of the gospel of Christ. Then came the World War. And it was the utter bankruptcy of the "social-Christian" movement, the impotence

of its leaders and followers in the stress and strain of the great catastrophe, their cowardly surrender to militaristic nationalism in all the warring countries—it was this disillusioning experience that led Barth into new paths of thought and into new ventures of life. So he tells us himself in his *Das Wort Gottes und die Theologie* (p. 100). It drove him to a renewed study of the Bible, especially the Pauline writings. It led to his discovery of the "Word of God" within the Bible and to the publication of *Der Römerbrief*. It marked the birth of a new movement. Barth himself at first called it "a corrective theology." But it speedily developed into the Theology of Crisis, which is not a correction but a radical repudiation of the liberal theology since Kant and Schleiermacher.

Thus, in the century since Schleiermacher, who died in 1834, one observes a progressive tendency to rationalize and humanize Christianity, a growing effort to harmonize it with the contemporaneous culture. Moreover, the so-called "historical Jesus," whom liberal theologians had recovered from the meshes of metaphysical speculation, was confidently claimed as the founder and leader of this humane religion. At the end of the nineteenth century it was no longer true that to be religious meant to be medieval. Religion had been modernized. Its fires glowed with a lofty urbanity and with an engaging humanity. It breathed its benediction upon the enfranchisement of the human spirit and upon the emancipation of mankind from the bondage of an irrational dogmatism.

Apart from reactionary orthodoxism only two significant voices were raised against this dominant tendency of the nineteenth century to harmonize Christianity with our modern culture and to claim the sanction and support of Christ for this process—the voices of Albert Schweitzer and of Rudolf Otto (seconded by Friedrich Heiler and Baron von Hügel). Schweitzer closes his remarkable book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, with this mystic ascription: "He comes to us as One Unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, he came to those men who knew him not. He speaks to us the same word, Follow thou me! If we obey him, he reveals himself to us in the conflict and suffering of his fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, we shall learn in our experience who he is." And Otto, in his widely read book, *Das Heilige*, claims that the Numinous is never lacking in the concept of the Deity, as found in all the religions of mankind, from the lowest to the highest. And this Numinosum is the irrational element in the tremendous mystery of God's power and incomprehensibility. In these two representative theologians one hears a protesting note against the prevalence of intellectualism and moralism in the liberal theology.

Such then is the wider background of the Barthian movement. Every theology becomes a meaningless abstraction separated from its soil in history. The most hallowed creed, lifted from its matrix in life, will sound like an hallucination. That is supremely true of Barth's theology. Only the disintegration of every objective norm in the social order, only the growing despair of relativism, vainly striving to find sure goals and inspiring destinies in its mechanistic universe, only the failure of liberal Christianity to establish God's kingdom by its alliance with reason and democracy, in short, only the cultural chaos of our times and its tragic climax in and since the World War, explains the vogue and spread of Barthianism. It makes its astonishing paradox at least intelligible and even plausible.

And Barthianism unquestionably is paradoxical in its absolute nihilism and negation of every current type of theology, whether confessional or liberal; in its bitter arraignment of organized Christianity for its alleged betrayal of the Absolute God to science and socialism, its cowardly compromise with reason and morality for the establishment of God's kingdom; in its polemic against "religion" as "the most subtle self-deception of man"; in its uncompromising transcendental theism; in its radical ontological dualism. "It fell like a bomb on the playground of theologians," said a Roman Catholic theologian. No wonder Harnack, the revered Nestor of German theology, exclaimed, "*Es ist mir schlechthin unverständlich.*" And one can understand the earlier fashion of startled theologians to coin nicknames for this erratic movement that attacked all and gave quarter to none. Some of them were fighting it with weapons that betrayed their panic. But you certainly cannot discredit, let alone exterminate, Barthianism with contemptuous labels, such as "Marcionitic Sheet-lightning," "Anabaptist *Schwärmerei*," "Decadence Theology," and "Desperado Eschatology."

It is interesting, also, and significant perhaps, to note some of the remarkable tributes elicited by this new movement from men outside the Protestant Church. The Jesuit leader, Przywara, wrote, "The aim of Barth, Gogarten, and Thurneysen is to achieve a genuine regeneration of Protestantism. For that they stand and strive with the glowing passion of the original Reformers. It is peculiarly tragical that these three renovators of that which is the essence of the Reformation should be so unintelligible to the leading contemporaneous theologians of the Protestant Church. Their desperate battle against Barth appears to me like a death-bed scene." Oswald Spengler, the author of *The Decline of Western Civilization*, boldly affirmed that Barth's thinking will control the mind of Europe for the next thousand years, even as Augustine's pessimistic dualism was dominant in a



previous millennium. And the leading Catholic journal of Germany declared, "There is no doubt that in the Protestant theology of Germany, which a few years ago appeared to the outside observer as a dry waste over which the hot wind of a limitless criticism played, wells have suddenly broken forth; a new sense for the supernatural realities, for God and his revelation, for faith and miracle rises up and fights with uncommon force." The reader will observe that these eulogistic tributes to Barth come from Catholic sources, which may explain their fervor, and from the man who predicted the speedy death of our civilization, whose ideals have perished and whose energies are exhausted.

Far more judicious and discerning, in my opinion, was the verdict of Hermann Keyserling, who wrote, "Protestantism to-day is in such mortal danger that only a radical cure can save it. And its only radical helpers and healers are Barth and Gogarten. In my judgment the whole fate of Protestantism, as a form of religion, lies in their hands. The life or death of Protestantism hinges on its capacity to endure and assimilate the type of theology represented by Barth and Gogarten. And nothing moves me to deeper pessimism than to observe how many Protestants imagine that they can repudiate it."

That balanced judgment of the meaning and merit of the Barthian movement, in the main, I share. We must "assimilate" it, though we cannot accept its paradoxical theology. Thus the answer to the query that forms the caption of this article is, Barthianism is both a peril and a promise. As a protest against certain dominant tendencies of the nineteenth century it demands and deserves our most serious consideration, but not as a program of theology. That, I think, is what Adolf Deissmann meant, when in a conversation with me he said, "In Germany Barth finds '*viel Anklang aber wenig Anhang*.'"

Originally the founder of the Theology of Crisis disclaimed any intention of forming a new school or a new system of theology. His movement was to be a "corrective," a "marginal note," a radical criticism of every contemporary system, but no more than that. Barth professed to have merely "a view-point," and not even "a stand-point." And that promise is borne out in his earlier writings where one looks in vain for a definite doctrinal content. Yet a very definite system of theology is directly implied in the one basic affirmation of the absolute antithesis between God and the world, God and man. And in its growth the movement soon passed from stentorian negations to dogmatic affirmations about every conceivable article of theological belief. Barth himself has published a *Dogmatik*, and Emil

Brunner, gifted and lucid, is generally recognized as the outstanding systematizer of the movement.

Crisis, in the Barthian vocabulary, denotes an eternal fact, not a temporal act, whether present or future. It means man's recognition of the utter negation and condemnation of this present fallen world, with all its achievements and values, wholly severed and separated from God by a supra-historical apostasy. It is filled to the brim with decay and death. Death is the gigantic shadow brooding over all the earth. It is the paradox, seen by all men of vision, from Job to Jesus, from Paul to Dostojevsky, and ignored only by the ruthless optimism of our Western culture. Our human life, thus, is a pseudo-life. All its vast fabric is tinsel, from the microbe to man, from the crudest animism to the highest "Christian Experience."

And over against this dead and doomed world Barth posits the eternal world of the living God. There is "an endless qualitative difference" between these two worlds—only antithetic contrast and no continuity whatsoever. In relation to the known world we can describe the Unknown only in negations. In terms of experienced possibilities we can place it only in the category of the impossible and the irrational. Therefore theology must needs use the dialectic method. It cannot apprehend the ultimate truth. It cannot affirm or deny anything about the supernatural world, for it knows nothing about it, save the bare fact of its awful existence.

This, of course, is the most radical ontological dualism. If it is true, then faith is, indeed, as Barth contends, not "*Erlebniss*," but "*Erkenntniss*." It is just our recognition, on the strength of "the Word of God," of this eternal crisis in which our whole world exists, our humble acceptance of it with the consequent re-adjustment of our lives to the will of the transcendent Deity. Only as we see this world in the light of the Eternal do we apprehend its interimistic significance. And our life in it becomes a peril which is, yet, a promise; and a promise which is at the same time a peril. The questions to which we can find no answer are seen to be God's own questions, whose answer is he alone.

"*Fasse es wer da kann*" (Comprehend it who may), Barth himself exclaims over the paradoxes of his system. And obviously these dogmatic affirmations raise many biblical, theological, and epistemological problems. On the basis of such a cosmic dualism, what becomes of God and of his revelation? Barth tells us that in Christ the perpetual crisis is overcome. There is no way from man to God, whether in morality, science, philosophy, or religion. But there is one way from God to man. That is Christ. He is the only solution of the intolerable riddle of life, that

merely finds its full poignancy in our religious striving and in our illusory religious "experience." He is the annulment of God's sentence of death upon all mankind; the realization of the impossible, and the demonstration of the irrational.

But this Christ remains himself a paradox in the Barthian system, the most perplexing of all. For Barth makes a sharp distinction between Jesus and the Christ. The former is never the Divine and the Eternal. He shares in full all the limitations of humanity. And historically his death upon the cross is just a self-sacrifice like that of a soldier in battle, and of no greater concern to us. But when this known historical episode is brought into relation to the unknown supra-historical God, it becomes a "Word" from God, the final annihilation of all human values. And just as the death of Jesus is God's final judgment upon all things human, so the resurrection of Christ is the proclamation of his infinite mercy. But this resurrection is not primarily an historical fact. The event recorded in the New Testament is merely the parable of that which as such can never appear in the field of history. It is the irruption of the Beyond into this world, which only "faith" can apprehend.

It is clear that, reasoning from such premises, the Barthian movement stands in absolute opposition to the theology of experience, dating from Schleiermacher. Barth rightly affirms that the watchwords of this theology have been synthesis, harmonization, reconciliation. He claims that the true mission of theology is to point out the inherent and eternal antithesis between the human and the divine, the immeasurable gulf between God and man, and the deep and necessary antagonism between our culture, in all its phases, and the gospel of salvation.

And it is becoming increasingly clear that, as a theological program or system, the movement represents an extreme one-sided reaction against certain dominant tendencies in modern theology. It is one-sided in its stress on the *Deus Absconditus*, and its pessimistic denial of all our cultural values. It is unfair to Schleiermacher and to the movement that derives from him in charging it with pure subjectivism. It is most dogmatic and uncritical in its manipulation of the biblical record of God's historical revelation. And it is unhistorical in sundering faith wholly from our experience. In his zeal to emancipate revelation and faith from the uncertainties of history and the vagaries of psychology, Barth lifts the Divine out of all relation to life.

I do not believe that a lasting influence can be exercised upon our generation by a theological system that leads, logically, to a Kantian agnosticism. Kant could make his appeal to our moral nature in order to rehabil-

itate God as a necessary postulate of life. But even that door is closed to Barthianism. Its faith in a wholly transcendent God, finally, rests upon no other basis than that of pure authoritarian dogmatism. And it would be a peril indeed to the future of Protestantism if it were compelled to construct an apologetic for its faith in God upon that crumbling foundation. But signs are not wanting that even in Germany religious objectivism is assuming a more tenable form than that represented by Barth.

But even the severest critics of Barth will gladly acknowledge their lasting debt to the movement initiated by him. As a protest against *fin-de-siecle* Modernism it was and still is full of promise. For who can deny that in the nineteenth century the objective realities of Christianity have undergone a progressive process of disintegration? They have been dissolved into the historical and psychological data of human experience. Who can doubt that in this process the notion of a transcendent and absolute Deity has not merely been humanized but sometimes volatilized into an impotent abstraction? Barth hoists his danger signal against this rushing tide of subjectivism and relativism that threatened to engulf Christian theology. He compels the whole theological world to focus its attention squarely upon its central problem: God and his revelation! At a time when many of the old idealistic currencies have lost their purchasing power in the mart of life, Barth proclaims his tremendous theocentricism. He inscribes the sovereignty of God boldly upon his banner as the supreme fact of life and as the solution of its insoluble problems.

That is the center of his Theology of Crisis. All else is peripheral. And at that focal point our reckoning with Barth must begin. We may not be ready to imitate his venturesome *salto mortale*, his death-leap from our Theology of Experience to his Theology of Crisis. But unless Christian theology can assimilate the corrective he offers its days are sparsely numbered. This assimilation of Barth, however, does not mean that we must abandon the path blazed by Schleiermacher a century ago and declare that he and his successors have led us into a blind alley. It will mean, rather, that we go forward on this well-marked path, probing more deeply into human experience, and finding there, in the depths of the total personality of man, made in God's image, the assurance of a vital religious life. Not by sundering the creative bond between God and the world and between God and man can we establish religious objectivism, but only by realizing more clearly than either Schleiermacher, Ritschl, or Hegel that the bond is neither feeling, will, nor mind, but the totality of our personal spiritual life.

## "The Translators to the Reader"

EDGAR J. GOODSPEED

**R**ELIGION was never more necessary in the world than to-day. Every advance of science increases the responsibility of the individual for the use of the new powers it has conferred upon him. The same advances steadily increase the allurements of life. From both points of view, the need of religion is increased.

No book means so much to religion as the Bible. In all its forms it has greatly served religion, and in its modern forms its meaning comes out more clearly and more tellingly than ever. It has more to teach the modern world about religion than even its strongest advocates have realized. Few of them have fully explored the wealth and depth of its contribution to modern religious attitudes.

Of all the forms of the English Bible, the most distinguished and widely cherished is the King James Version. Its value for religion is very great, and it is on that account all the more important that its origin and place in the history of the Bible be understood, so that false ideas about it may not prevail, for in so far as they do prevail they are likely to impair and distort its religious usefulness.

There can be no doubt, however, that widespread and serious misapprehensions as to its origin do very generally prevail, and that these seriously condition its religious value. The literary interest and the liturgical value of that version are of course universally recognized. It is a classic of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English, and it is a treasure of Christian liturgy, deeply freighted with religious associations. These are values every man of culture will at once acknowledge and approve.

It is, moreover, deeply imbedded in the affection and devotion of great groups of people, not all of them religious. They find in it the final embodiment of moral, social, and literary values which they greatly prize. This is in itself a fact of great importance. Even if the version were itself less eminent as an English classic or a liturgical masterpiece the extraordinary prestige it enjoys would give it a consequence all its own.

The tremendous significance thus generally attached to it by the public makes it imperative that the facts as to its origin and ancestry be well known, or the most fantastic misconceptions about these matters will arise and prevail. But these facts are not well known, and these misconceptions consequently do prevail to an amazing extent.

The King James Version is predominantly the Bible of the unedu-



cated, and it will undoubtedly continue to be so for a long time to come. This fact makes it doubly important that it be presented to them as intelligently and as intelligibly as possible. This well-recognized fact has led its publishers through the generations to have it tacitly revised from time to time, so that the obsolete words and spellings might not confuse the ordinary reader. This commendable activity began immediately upon the first publication of the version in 1611 and continued intermittently until 1769 when, under the hands of Doctor Blayney of Oxford, it reached its present form. It has cleared the text of the version of innumerable antique spellings, such as Hierusalem, Marie, assoone, foorth, shalbe, fet, creeples, fift, sixt, ioy, middes, charet and the like. Comparatively few verses in the version have escaped such improvements and modernizations, and most verses contain several such changes.

It has also corrected the numerous misprints of the version, so that it is now one of the most accurately printed books in the world. The one original misprint to survive is the famous "strain (straine) at a gnat" in Matthew 23. 24 (for "strain out a gnat"), which has so endeared itself to users of King James that no modern publisher has the temerity to set it right.

The omission of the Apocrypha from most modern printings of King James and the insertion of Archbishop Ussher's chronology, which first appeared in its margins in 1701, were more serious changes from the original King James; the chronology in particular has certainly outlived its usefulness and, as at best a late accretion upon the version, ought not to continue.

But it is the omission of the great preface, "The Translators to the Reader," that is most to be regretted. The makers of the version in their day felt that the work called for some explanation and defense, and entrusted the writing of a suitable preface to Myles Smith, of Brasenose College, Oxford, afterward Bishop of Gloucester. His preface for many years stood at the beginning of the version. But for various reasons, its length, its obscurity, its controversial and academic character, it has gradually come to be omitted by modern publishers of the King James, which is thus made to present itself to the reader abruptly and without explanation or introduction of any kind.

The result of this upon the hosts of ignorant and untrained people who use the version is disastrous in the extreme. My own correspondence abounds in letters from well-meaning people who have been led into the strangest misconceptions by its absence. It is indeed long, controversial and

pedantic, but this very fact is significant. And with all its faults, it says some things about the version and its makers and their aims that still greatly need to be said; indeed that must be said, if the readers of the version are to be given the protection and guidance that they deserve and that its makers provided for them.

For they will accept this guidance and protection from no one else. It is idle for any modern to attempt to correct these misapprehensions; his efforts will only be resented or ignored. But if the King James Bible itself can be shown to say to its adherents the very things they most need to know about their version, it will be possible for them to benefit by them without embarrassment or inconsistency. All the more necessity, it would seem, for restoring the great Preface, or at least the essential parts of it, to its rightful place in the "Authorized Bible."

What are some of the views held by the habitual readers of the King James Bible about it? Let me answer out of my own recent correspondence and experience, being careful not to exaggerate or distort, but to set down only what self-constituted champions of King James have actually written over or under their own signatures.

And first of all must come the widespread belief that the King James Bible is "the original." This is probably the prevailing impression of those who use it, but it has been most definitely and repeatedly expressed by a distinguished journalist in his paper, the *North China Daily News*. In an article published in the *News* in 1926 the editor steadily refers to the King James Version as "the original." We cannot doubt that this cultivated Englishman actually believes the King James Bible to be the original English Bible. For him the illustrious services of Bible translators and revisers from William Tyndale to Matthew Parker simply do not exist. That these men produced nineteen twentieths of what now stands in the King James Version has no force for him. Indeed, he definitely denies them and all their works when he steadily and publicly, in print, in an editorial article in his own newspaper, describes the King James Version over and over again as "the original."

It is no matter that you and I know that this is far from true. It is no matter that we know the King James is avowedly a revision of the Bishops' Bible of 1568, and that it was in turn a revision of the Great Bible of 1539, and that it was a revision of Thomas Matthew's Bible of 1537, which in turn embodied the last work of William Tyndale. It does not matter that these facts can be gathered in a few minutes from any encyclopedia, nor that even they do not carry us to the "original" Bible, the work

of the prophets and apostles. For that, we must of course go fourteen hundred years back of the earliest of these English Bibles to the Greek and Hebrew. All that is of course utterly beyond the ken of those who declare the King James Bible to be the original.

For these people will not give up so cherished if naive a view for any say-so of ours. On the contrary, it would only serve to set them more rigidly in it. To whom then would they look with some willingness to learn? To the King James Bible itself. If its original Preface were once more offered to them, as it was offered to the first readers of that version, and as its makers intended it to be offered to all its readers, they could hardly refuse to listen.

And, indeed, the people who hold these fantastic ideas are not so much to blame for them as the publishers and printers who have so steadily deprived them of the protection from such egregious mistakes which the King James Preface so amply and ably provided. The Shanghai editor could not have gone so absurdly wrong if he had found in the Preface of his King James these words which the makers of that version meant to have him find there:

"Truly (good Christian Reader) wee never thought from the beginning, that we should neede to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, . . . but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principall good one, not iustly to be excepted against; . . ."

A leading layman, in one of our most intellectual communions, has just told me that he always supposed the modern translations of the Bible were made from the King James Version, and only to-day, a newspaper paragraph, with the commanding endorsement of the Associated Press, explicitly makes that assertion. What can save these thoughtful, well-meaning people from the idea that the King James Bible is the "original"? Nothing, I submit, but the statements of its own Preface.

"If you aske what they (the Translators) had before them," says the Preface, "truely it was the Hebrew text of the Olde Testament, the Greeke of the New. . . . If trueth be to be tried by these tongues, then whence should a Translation be made but out of them? These tongues therefore, the Scriptures wee say in those tongues, wee set before us to translate, being the tongues wherein God was pleased to speak to his Church by his Prophets and Apostles. . . . Neither, to be short, were we the first that fell in hand with translating the Scripture into English, and consequently destitute of former helpes, . . ."

These are just the things that the modern reader of King James needs

to know, and that the Translators intended him to know. Why should they be kept from him? A few months ago the *New York Times* and the *Literary Digest* united in offering the strange intelligence that "the King James Version was compiled from the only six original papyri extant in 1611." What more can possibly be said?

Another widespread impression as to the King James is that it is *the* Authorized Bible. Indeed some very scholarly men insist upon designating it in that way, and strongly resent the application to it of any other name. We need not go into the old vexed question of whether or not it was ever actually authorized. For practically it certainly was so, and so regarded, being in fact the third Authorized Bible of the English Church. The first was the Great Bible of 1539, which was intended for church use. The second was the Bishops' Bible of 1568, and the third the King James of 1611. Authorized meant of course officially recognized for use in public worship, as the phrase "Appointed to be read in Churches" shows.

But when the Convocation of Canterbury in 1870 inaugurated the revision of the English Bible, it was definitely with a view to providing a more suitable Bible for purposes of public worship, and as a matter of fact the English Revised Bible of 1881-85 has, we are told, definitely displaced the King James in the use of Canterbury Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.

In the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, Canon 45 provides that the lessons at the morning and evening service shall be read in the King James Bible ("which is the standard Bible of this church"), or in the Revised Version, or in the American Standard Version.

The Roman Catholic Church in this country uses in public worship the Douay Bible. It will be seen that the King James is far from being *the* Authorized Bible to-day.

But the tragic part of it all is that the people who still call it the Authorized Bible understand by that term something very different from this. They understand it to mean divinely authorized. I have to-day received a letter from a very zealous young minister at Atlantic City, definitely declaring his belief in the verbal inspiration of the King James Version. This extraordinary view is very widely held.

Of course the Translators made no such claim; indeed their account of their method of work fits very poorly with such an idea of it:

"Neither did wee thinke much to consult the Translators or Commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greeke, or Latine, no nor the Spanish, French, Italian, or Dutch; neither did we disdaine to revise that which we

had done, and to bring backe to the anvil that which we had hammered: but having and using as great helpe as were needfull, and fearing no reproach for slownesse, nor coveting praise for expedition, wee have at the length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the worke to that passe that you see.

"Some peradventure would have no varietie of sences to be set in the margine, lest the authoritie of the Scriptures for the deciding of controversies by that shew of uncertaintie, should somewhat be shaken. But we hold their judgement not to be so sound in this point. . . . Yet for all that it cannot be dissembled, that partly to exercise and whet our wits, . . . and lastly, that we might be forward to seeke ayd of our brethren by conference, and never scorne those that be not in all respects so complete as they should bee, being to seeke in many things ourselves, it hath pleased God in his divine providence, heere and there to scatter wordes and sentences of that difficultie and doubtfulnesse, . . . that fearfulness would better besee me us than confidence, and if we will resolve, to resolve upon modestie with S. Augustine, . . . There be many words in the Scriptures, which be never found there but once, . . . so that we cannot be holpen by conference of places. Againe, there be many rare names of certaine birds, beastes and precious stones, &c. . . . Now in such a case, doth not a margine do well to admonish the Reader to seeke further, and not to conclude or dogmatize upon this or that peremptorily? . . . Therefore as S. Augustine saith, that varietie of Translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures: so diversitie of signification and sense in the margine, where the text is not so cleare, must needes doe good, yea, is necessary, as we are perswaded."

These candid, scholarly words of the Translators are not the words of inspired men, oracularly confident of every word they use; they are the unmistakable words of careful, sincere scholars, well aware of the inevitable limitations of their knowledge. The doctrine of the inspiration of the Translators was not held by them, and it is difficult to see how it can be held by anyone who will read even this much of their Preface.

Another prevalent notion about the King James Bible is that it is poetry. On this point Thomas Hardy wrote in his journal, in 1918:

"By the will of God some men are born poetical. Of these some make themselves practical poets, others are made poets by lapse of time who were hardly recognized as such. Particularly has this been the case with the translators of the Bible. They translated into the language of their age; then the years began to corrupt that language as spoken, and to add gray



lichen to the translation; until the moderns who use the corrupted tongue marvel at the poetry of the old words. When new they were not more than half so poetical. So that Coverdale, Tyndale and the rest of them are as ghosts what they never were in the flesh."

It must be clear that the men who, by making innumerable small changes in the text of the Bishops' Bible produced the King James Version, were poets, if at all, only in the most attenuated sense of the word. It is not thus that poems are made.

But if anyone had any doubt remaining as to the justice of Thomas Hardy's judgment, it must unquestionably evaporate in the presence of the Preface. The translators who there emerge are much closer to pedants than to poets. "They came or were thought to come to the worke, not *exercendi causa* (as one saith) but *exercitati*, that is, learned, not to learne: . . . Therefore such were thought upon as could say modestly with Saint Hierome, . . . Both we have learned the Hebrew tongue in part, and in the Latine wee have been exercised almost from our verie cradle."

Their aim was not poesy but clearness: "But we desire that the Scripture may speake like itselfe, . . . that it may bee understood even of the very vulgar."

But of course the greatest illusion about the King James Bible is that it is the sole, unique, divine Bible, untouched by human hands. This doctrine, grotesque as it is, is actually held as a matter of course by the vast majority of people. The publication of any preface from the Translators to the Reader would by its very presence, whatever its contents, do much to remedy this. The superstitious veneration with which some very pious people regard it would be corrected by the reprinting of the Preface.

But not the pious alone. Many editors, novelists, and professors cherish views about the version that are simply slightly rationalized forms of the same notion. Sentimental statements about it in current books and papers, that its translators "went about their work in the spirit of little children," or that "it is a finer and nobler literature than the Scriptures in their original tongues," are but survivals of the old dogma of uniqueness, so explicitly disclaimed in the Preface:

" . . . we are so farre off from condemning any of their labours that traveled before us in this kinde, either in this land or beyond sea, . . . that we acknowledge them to have been raised up of God, . . . and that they deserve to be had of us and of posteritie, in everlasting remembrance. . . . Yet for all that, as nothing is begun and perfited at the same time,

and the later thoughts are thought to be the wiser: so, if we building upon their foundation that went before us, and being holpen by their labours, doe endeavour to make that better which they left so good; no man, we are sure, hath cause to mislike us; they, we perswade ourselves, if they were alive, would thanke us."

These are great sentences, well worth reproducing to-day.

The position of the publishers that the Preface is too academic does not justify them in omitting it. If they will let their readers know even this about the origin of the version, it will save them from grievous error. The King James revisers were university professors and scholars. They were an academic group. Why withhold this fact from their readers, especially if silence on this point is leading to such dire consequences?

One of the most unfortunate things about the adherents of the King James Version is their antipathy to scholars. They regard them with grave suspicion. Yet their own version is the masterpiece of biblical scholarship in Jacobean England. If the Preface reveals no more to them than this, it would be worth printing, for it is precisely this rift between piety and learning that is most dangerous to the church. As a matter of fact, we owe the English Bible to university men, from the sixteenth century to the twentieth. It could hardly be otherwise. But to-day, not one reader of King James in ten thousand even dreams that any biblical scholar had anything to do with his English Bible.

The argument of the publishers that the Preface is controversial is also nugatory. The version sprang out of controversy; the Preface reflects the fact; why conceal it? The hushing of controversy in the history of Christianity does not make for intelligence. The New Testament itself sprang, much of it, out of controversy; 1 and 2 Corinthians, for instance. It is precisely this muting that has produced the impression that the version originated in some other, better world than ours. If the Preface shows its human background, let us have it, since it is a part of the truth.

The translators were well aware that their work would have to encounter strong opposition:

"Zeale to promote the common good," they began, "whether it be by devising any thing our selves, or revising that which hath bene laboured by others, deserueth certainly much respect and esteeme, but yet findeth but cold intertainment in the world." . . .

"For he that medleth with mens Religion in any part, medleth with their custome, nay, with their freehold; and though they finde no content in that which they have, yet they cannot abide to heare of altering."

"Many mens mouths have bene open a good while (and yet are not stopped) with speeches about the Translation so long in hand, or rather perusals of Translations made before: and aske what may be the reason, what the necessitie of the employment: Hath the Church bene deceived, say they, all this while? . . . Was their Translation good before? Why doe they now mend it? Was it not good? Why then was it obtruded to the people?" . . .

Without these trenchant sentences, people are left with the impression that the King James translation descended like the gentle dew from heaven, amidst universal acclaim. The silencing of the controversial note of the Preface puts a false face upon the version, for which its original makers are not to blame.

A third objection raised by the publishers to restoring the Preface, is its obscurity, and the confusion it would create, in the mind of the ordinary reader. If this confusion means that the reader would be made aware that there had been and might be other versions of the Bible, it might better be called clarification. Confusion is the ordinary reader's present condition of mind, as I have tried to show. Left without the translators' guidance, he now believes the King James to be the "original," divinely inspired, unique, not made with hands, final and definitive. To break in upon this false assurance with the clear statements of the Preface may produce a temporary confusion, but the confusion will be due to the disastrous practice of omitting the Preface, not to the healthful one of including it.

And as for obscurity, is the Preface any more obscure than the version it introduced? This is the strangest of all reasons for the King James printers to adduce, yet I have it before me in writing from one of the greatest of his publishers.

"The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd."

So reads the King James Version. Is there anything in the Preface that approaches this in obscurity? Yet publishers justify the omission of the Preface on the ground that it is "obscure." There is not a sentence in it as obscure as this one, or as hosts of others in the King James Version. No, if obscurity is the criterion, the publishers might have omitted the version and printed the Preface, but hardly the other way. It must be that the publishers are quite unaware of the marked obscurity of great areas of their own version.

A recent advocate of the King James Version says of the English

Bible: "Much of the writing is inferior. . . . Whole sections of the historical narratives are written in an immature and inferior manner. . . . Some of the prophets have only a single verse that arrests attention. Only occasionally did Paul reveal his tremendous capacity to express thought in a memorable manner." What does this mean, but that the writer does not understand his version? The simple truth is, the obscurity of the King James Version is its outstanding trait. When a man says things like this about Paul and the prophets, he is indicting, not the Bible at all, but his version of it. He reveals the fact that he is using a version he cannot understand.

It may require some patience for the modern reader to peruse the King James Preface. But think of the patience he is called upon to exhibit in reading long obscure areas of Paul and the prophets! He is by no means unaccustomed to reading his Bible in the midst of obscurity. And it is an admirable idea to have a genuine piece of first class Jacobean prose before him, side by side with the Jacobean revision, to show him how these revisers actually wrote when not translating but expressing their own thoughts. Here their real literary standards appear, in an authentic sample. If to their modern publishers their style appears obscure, it may in part explain the greater obscurity of their version. And at all events, it shows how they thought one should write. This affords their readers an example of what they considered clear and forceful English, and the value of this to any serious reader of King James, as a measuring rod, a standard of style, is unmistakable. Anyone who can understand the version can understand the Preface, and no one who cannot understand the Preface can understand the version.

To me, of course, the religious values of the Bible far outweigh any mere literary considerations. It has great messages which the modern world greatly needs. To obscure these messages in phraseology which may once have conveyed them but is now so quaint and antique as to belong to the museums of literature, seems to me a very shocking and tragic business. It is like denying a very sick man the medical aid of to-day and giving him instead the treatment of the sixteenth century, because it is so picturesque! It is like insisting upon cupping him and bleeding him, at the risk of his health and even of his life.

But even to those who take the Bible less seriously; to the dogmatist and the dilettante, it must be clear that the King James Preface belongs at the beginning of the King James Bible, where its makers put it and meant it to remain; and that the reasons advanced by its publishers for

omitting it are really very cogent reasons for restoring it to its rightful place.

Especially for students, the Preface, with its wealth of contemporary materials and attitudes, is indispensable. In a humanities course for college freshmen, a Western university recently purchased forty-three copies of the King James Bible—without the Preface. In no other field of study would such a course have been dreamed of. To approach that version historically, and as any student should, without the Preface is simply impossible. What has been said of the importance of the Preface to the general reader is even more true of the student, and it is high time our teachers of the English Bible in colleges awoke to the fact. But how can they be expected to awake to it, when very few of them have ever seen a Bible containing the Preface? For the past hundred years, from the point of view of everyone—ministers, professors, students, general readers, pious readers—the Preface has been virtually suppressed.

The only edition of the Bible containing it since 1817 is the English Royal quarto, published by the Oxford University Press. But this book sells at a price of \$30 to \$45 and is very seldom seen in America. At best it is an expensive pulpit Bible, which we cannot expect colleges to place in quantities in their reading rooms. On the other hand, the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society seem never to have included it at all in their Bibles.

It is true, it has more than once been published in books about the Bible. J. R. Dore, at the special request of Christopher Wordsworth, Bishop of Lincoln, introduced the Preface as an appendix into the second edition of his *Old Bibles*; and A. W. Pollard, in his *Records of the English Bible*, reprinted it in full. "This preface," said Richard Lovett (*The Printed English Bible*), "most unhappily long ago ceased to form a part of the ordinary editions." "It is to be regretted," wrote John Stoughton (*Our English Bible*), "that while the dedication appears in all the editions, the address to the readers is inserted in very few. It would be a good alteration to cancel the former and universally introduce the latter."

This is no idle demand, of a few savants and specialists, in the interests of mere erudition, but a crying need of present-day religion, of which the King James Bible is undeniably still the chief stay. That that edition should continue to sink into greater and greater misconception and misrepresentation, when much of it might be prevented by the simple and obvious device of restoring the Preface, is intolerable. That version is too deeply freighted with religious values to be left at the mercy of every charlatan



to exploit. Its Preface is a great monument of sound biblical learning and method. Its readers need it as they have never needed it before. It lies ready to our hands, enfolding in itself the very correctives modern vagaries about the King James Bible so sadly need.

It is not enough that it is somewhere available in public libraries, in books about the Bible. Who knows about these books? I have had letters and inquiries from intelligent, educated ministers, asking where the Preface can be found. They had never heard of it. What chance, then, has the ordinary reader to know of it or find his way to it? The King James Version is a tremendous force in the modern world, very potent for good if it be intelligently used, but for evil if it be left unexplained. What most of its readers chiefly need is education about it, and that is precisely what its Preface provides.

For my part, I know of no greater service that can be done to biblical study to-day, than to put back the King James Preface into its rightful place, in every copy of that great version, to the understanding of which it is so indispensable.

The Translators of King James were concerned to make clear the *meaning* of the Bible to their readers. They declared their purpose to be to make it "understood of the very vulgar." They were not seeking to aggrandize themselves or their work, but to transmit with as little dilution as possible the great religious values of the ancient Greek and Hebrew scriptures. Their concern was for the message, not for its form. "For is the kingdome of God become words or syllables? Why should wee be in bondage to them if we may be free . . . ?"

# Prayer

DWIGHT BRADLEY

SOME time ago I attended a religious service in which an avowed humanist led in prayer. The impression of futility which remained with me after the prayer had ended, has since then given me much pause.

At first blush I was unable to account for this impression, for the prayer was in most respects unusually fine. Its content was thoughtful. Its language dignified. Its structure excellent. Its mood reverent. Its delivery restrained yet convincing. Nothing that could be found in it was amiss. Nor did it lack any element of feeling or sincerity the absence of which should warrant criticism.

However, something was wrong with the prayer. It went wide of its mark. It did not reach its aim. It seemed futile.

After the service I asked a person for whose judgment I have great respect what *she* thought about the humanist's prayer. Her reply was to the point. She said, "But it wasn't a prayer at all."

"What was it then?" I asked.

"It was an essay or lecture," she answered. "A very good one. But not a prayer."

Basing my thought upon this incident, I have tried to think through more carefully than I have ever done before the meaning of prayer and what is involved when we pray. I have tried to find out what explicitly it is that can turn an essay or a lecture into a prayer; and what conversely can turn a prayer into a lecture or an essay.

In setting forth my conclusions, I must insert a few definitions, which may be used as pegs on which to hang our thought. It is quite possible that the pegs will not stand the strain. Definitions are at best an expedient. They have only a tentative value.

1. *Prayer is a function of personality in relation to other personalities.*

By this I mean that a prayer involves at least two persons: the person who prays and the person to whom the prayer is directed.

This definition offers wide latitude to our conception of prayer. In fact, its only limit is that laid down by our conception of personality. Whenever and wherever two or more personalities are found, then and there it is possible to have prayer.

On the other hand, *unless* two or more persons are brought in, prayer is impossible.

One person may pray to another person, or to several other persons. Several persons may pray to one person. But it is impossible for one person rationally to pray to empty space, or to an impersonal object, or to himself.

In other words, prayer is fundamentally a personal relationship involving oneself and other selves.

When Eugene O'Neill wants to satirize a tendency to worship the machine, he makes his protagonist in "The Dynamo," Reuben Light, *personify* the machine which he adores. Thus, the distracted youth deludes himself into thinking that The Dynamo is a Mother Goddess, and he beseeches his sweetheart to worship with him. "Listen, Ada!" he begs, "I want you to pray to her—up there where I pray sometimes—under her arms—with your arms like her arms—stretching out for me!"

Fantastic as this is, it would be even more fantastic to show a character who should try to pray to a machine which he regarded merely as a machine. No intelligent dramatist would do such a thing nor would he present a character in the act of praying to nothing. Nor would he have a character pray to himself unless the character were a "divided personality." This is because prayer cannot be conceived of apart from a relationship between persons. It may be that one or more of the persons involved are the invention of a deranged mind. So long as one person believes, however mistakenly, that he is in contact with another person, he can pray. But when he believes or realizes that there is no other person with whom he can have contact, then he can pray no longer. He can think aloud. He can soliloquize. He can write an essay or an article or even deliver a lecture for his own delight and satisfaction. But he cannot pray. In order to pray he must have someone, either real or imaginary, to whom he can address his prayer, and to that person his prayer must be addressed.

When, therefore, it was said of the humanist's prayer that it was really not a prayer, the criticism was well founded. For the prayer was addressed to no person—neither to God nor to man. To be sure there was an audience. But the prayer was not addressed to the audience. The humanist was not praying to the congregation. He was simply standing on a platform and expressing idealistic sentiments while several hundred of his fellow beings listened with grave but detached attention. Had he so desired he might have prayed to his hearers; and had he done so he might technically have been praying albeit with egregiously bad taste. Actually, however, the functional relationship between him and the congregation was that of a person speaking aloud his own thought in the presence of other

persons whose attention to what he said was that of entirely disinterested listeners.

2. *Prayer is a directed expression of desire aimed at fulfillment and predicated on faith in the outcome.*

This definition assumes the first one to be correct. It simply limits the scope of prayer a little more narrowly. According to this, it is not enough that two or more persons be involved—the person who prays and the person to whom the prayer is addressed. In addition to this functional relationship, there must be the desire for a definite outcome, a directed aim at the fulfillment of such desire, and a hopeful expectation of its fulfillment.

Suppose, for example, I have a personal contact with another person called "A." To him I address a petition, which he receives. Suppose, furthermore, that I do not care very much whether or not he receives my petition, have no very clear idea as to what I really want, and do not believe that there would be any likelihood of my receiving what I ask for even if I should request it with urgency. Perhaps I believe that I could achieve the object of my half-hearted desire through my own effort if I should exert myself. Perhaps I merely express the desire as a matter of habit, or as an act of formal courtesy.

What then? Granting for the moment that real prayer is possible when both the one that prays and the one that receives the prayer are human persons—granting this for the moment, can a personal relationship of so lack-luster a quality be made the ground for authentic prayer? If not, how much less possible it is to regard a similarly neutral or formal relationship between a man and his God as furnishing the basis of anything that deserves the name of prayer! If so watered-down a conception of prayer be allowed, then to pray means so little as to be nothing.

It is out of such thin stuff, however, that many people create their ideas about prayer. The present sophisticated tendency to regard prayer as having chief and even sole value as a process of psychological suggestion shows the result. It is held by some to be a good thing for people to pray, chiefly because of the effect it has on their own state of mind. It relieves tension. It quiets and relaxes the nerves. It taps the resources of the subconsciousness. While having no objective value, it has great value subjectively. It is employed, therefore, as part of the technique of psychotherapy.

We should not quarrel with this view of prayer if it were not for the fact that it is so often accepted as the complete view. Obviously, prayer can do all of these things. But only as a by-product of its major accomplishment. The subjective or psychological results of prayer are the effects

of objective causes. That is, they are results in the life of a person who prays of his expressed desire, his determined aim, and his faith in a successful outcome. But in order that he may feel justified in expressing his desire, keeping up his determination, and expecting results, he must first be convinced that the person he prays to is a real person who cares for him and who is able to help him.

According to those who lay chief stress on the subjective value of prayer, it makes little difference whether or not the person who prays is deluded in his belief in the reality of the one to whom he prays. All that matters is that he believe. Accordingly, a fancy is as good as a fact, so long as the patient thinks it is a fact. If a person believes in God, let him pray to God. If not, let him pray to someone or something in which he does believe. A dynamo, perhaps—or a Cosmic Urge! What counts is the psychological effect upon the person. All else is merely incidental.

To the one who respects prayer as a vital function of personality in relation to other personalities, and who holds that prayer must be an expression of real desire directed to a real person with determination and faith, the subjectivization of prayer is a matter of profound regret. He knows that merely subjective prayer is no prayer at all. It is only a form of auto-suggestion.

For this reason, the humanistic prayer, which serves as the basis of our discussion, proves itself to be lacking in a second essential element; namely, the element of determined faith in the outcome. Since the prayer was addressed to no one it failed to qualify under our first definition. Because it had no objective aim or determined expectancy it fails to qualify under the second.

3. *Prayer is a practical occupation behind which lies a theistic world view.*

At this point we come to a direct challenge of the humanistic philosophy, as represented by the person who was responsible for the prayer in question. There is, to be sure, a humanism which is at least vaguely theistic. We are not concerned here with that. We are meeting now the issue of a humanism which limits personality to that which is found in human beings living physically on the earth.

Is it possible for a non-theistic humanist to pray? This is the question before us now.

Technically, and according to our first two definitions, it *is* possible for a humanist who does not believe in God to pray. He can pray to his fellow human beings.



But in order to pray to them he must address his prayer directly to them; and he must have a persistent and determined faith in their power to answer his prayer.

So far as I know, non-theistic humanists are not in the habit of doing this. I have never heard or read a prayer that was directed to humanity as a whole or to any individual in particular. The prayers of those who do not believe in God or in any person or persons besides the human, seem usually to be the verbalized expression of idealistic sentiments couched in language of a piously poetical sort and directed to no one at all. Addressed neither to God nor to man, they show the absence not only of aim, determination and expectancy, but also of any sense of practical bearing upon the objective and concrete tasks of life. They have no robustness, no strength, no assurance. They lack the vigor of a vital grip on actuality. They are like flowers with beautiful petals and pleasant aroma which are not able to fructify. They have no fertility.

The absurdity of addressing prayer to human beings is patent to most rational persons. The absurdity of addressing prayer to no one at all should be even more patent. Prayer, practically understood, is a function of personality in relation to personality on a higher scale than itself. But the theist alone is able to function in such a relationship. Whatever the detail and specifications of his theism (and of course there are many kinds), he believes in one God or several gods. Thus, he has someone greater than himself, greater than any man like himself, to whom he may lift his heart in determined and expectant prayer. Not so, however, the person whose theory excludes the divine.

Thus, by our third definition, the limits of authentic prayer are narrowed down to a world view that is theistic. Not only must there be a relationship of two or more persons, not only must there be a determined aim and an expectant faith, but there must be also a belief in some person or persons, above our human stature, to whom prayer may be addressed and by whom prayer may be effectively answered.

We are left now with the task of narrowing down our definition still farther in order to draw the limit upon prayer that is specifically and distinctly Christian.

In doing this we are quite within the bounds of fairness in retaining the humanist's prayer as material for criticism: for while an outspoken non-theistic humanist, this particular person maintains his position as a minister in good standing in a church which, although liberal by tradition, has never resigned its Christian status,

4. *Prayer is an effective process by which a Christian establishes and maintains conscious personal contact with God as he is revealed by Jesus Christ.* This is our final definition.

Christian prayer, when distinctly Christian, has this peculiar characteristic: that its expressed desire, its aim, and its expectancy, all are rooted in a personal relationship with One who is held to be God's incarnation in human form. However far afield our Christian thought may go from time to time, it is ultimately (sometimes in spite of itself) drawn back to this conviction. There seems to be no other alternative in the long run: we must either renounce our Christian faith or hold to the faith which comes through Jesus Christ.

This being so, the prayer of a Christian is of a certain sort. A Christian prays as Jesus prayed, as Jesus taught his first disciples to pray, and as his living Spirit working upon our hearts and minds persuades us to pray each in his own tongue.

The prayer of a Christian is, accordingly, an effective process by which he establishes and maintains such a personal relationship with God as Jesus makes possible by his life, by his teaching and by his Living Spirit.

This relationship is described by Jesus as that of children with their father. It is a relationship of conscious comradeship involving all things that are good and true and beautiful, and made perfect by love.

In this relationship Christ takes the part of revealer and helper. He shows us God in his own Person. He shows us the way to God by his own life. He redeems us from the power of perversity and leads us into the presence of God where we may be at home.

When he prays, a Christian takes all this for granted. He prays, therefore, in the name of Jesus and through the medium of his Spirit. Not by any means discounting the prayers of those who do not pray in this manner, he himself regards this specifically Christian avenue of prayer as being above all others the most satisfying and the most direct.

How different then from the humanist's prayer is the prayer of a convinced Christian! The Christian wonders a little why the non-theistic humanist desires to be considered a Christian, and how he is able to regard himself as one. In this surprise, a Christian need find no admixture of intolerance or bigotry. Indeed, he must be certain that no such admixture is there. Only, he is entitled to his wonder because prayer means to him such a very different thing.

To him prayer means, first of all, comradeship with God his Eternal Father. Then it means an expressed desire to do that Father's will. Then

it means an expectant faith in that Father's love for him and in that Father's power and constant readiness to show his love in ways which are beyond mere human understanding. Then it means a simple belief in Christ as the Father's revelation. Then it means an acceptance of responsibility to live on the earth in brotherly relations with his fellow men. Then it means a practical and useful exertion of his strength with God's help in helping to establish a better civilization. Finally it means a willingness to share in whatever suffering and sacrifice may be necessary in order to live like a loyal member of God's family; convinced that by so doing he who does it will receive the full reward of his loyalty in an eternal fellowship of ever-increasing joy.

This is exactly what prayer means to a real Christian, however differently the meaning may be described. It is not too much to say that the prayer of a Christian is what he lives by. It is to his soul what the blood stream is to his body and what the air is to his lungs. It is as simple as eyesight and as precious. Without it he would find himself bereft of strength, of peace, of happiness and of hope.

When he prays he says, "Our Father." In that address he sums up his whole philosophy of life, and dedicates himself through Jesus Christ to the service of God's great family here on earth.

With the possibility of such prayer within our grasp why should we be content with any lesser thing?

# Faith, Works, and Social Salvation

H. RICHARD NIEBUHR

OUR political and economic schemes as well as worship reflect our religious attitudes. Whether we are conscious of it or not, our most carefully considered plans in education or in church administration express our religious sense of orientation in life. The tactics of living is related to the strategy of life; if our professed strategy and our actual tactics do not agree that is an indication that our profession is not a confession. When we observe the tactical arrangements of a new movement, or of an old one, it is always important to inquire what strategy lies behind them, or what religious attitude toward life is expressed in them.

The problem of long-range planning, of rational social control and management, which now confronts the American people has such relations to a fundamental religious orientation in life. We are being told that since we have made a general mess of things, economically, religiously, politically, we must seek our salvation by reducing the complex cultural world to a pattern and by providing for the operation of its machinery as a single, interrelated whole. What is necessary, it seems, is that we impose upon our economic organization the plan of a modern efficiency-engineered factory, in which the co-operation of all factors is carefully adjusted for the purpose of gaining a certain definite result, in which rational considerations dominate the whole process of production by carefully regulating the relations of means to end.

In political life the same road to salvation is urged upon us by example or word. In Fascism and Communism the engineering principle has been applied to government. The efficient operation of the political machine requires centralized control, the subordination of the legislative to the executive function, the employment of governmental agencies as research institutions which will enable the executive to deal rationally with the raw material and produce the desired results. If Italy, Russia and Germany have adopted the scheme in practice, America is going a long way toward its acceptance in spirit. It pours scorn upon its legislature, extends its fact-finding and administrative machinery, and, despite present dissent, continues to preserve a large amount of respect for its executive engineer.

The tactics of careful planning, of the rational co-ordination of means and ends, of the exclusion of purely impulsive and traditional elements from the social processes, are evident in much of our less public life. We seek to apply their principles to the education of our children, to the man-

agement of our budgeted family finances, to the preparation of lectures and sermons, and there have been instances of their application to the manufacture of poetry and music. In a thousand ways our daily existence is modified by suspicion of the spontaneous, the organic, the non-teleological, the impulsive and by reliance upon the mechanical, the rational, and the planned. Nothing in our hereditary religion is more foreign to our attitude than the advice that we take no thought for the morrow and on few have divines exercised their skill in reinterpretation more astutely and unhappily.

The economic interpretation ascribes this approach to life, in which mechanical rather than organic categories dominate, to the influence of the machine upon our habits of thought. An interpretation in terms of ideas accounts for the machine as the product of rationalism. But, however we explain the origin of the approach, we cannot but discern in it the expression of a fundamentally religious attitude. The habit of social planning, of personal engineering, presupposes a certain rather definite orientation in life. It has a creed, whether it be consciously accepted or not, and the creed is a double one, containing the great negative assertion that we cannot trust nature, the social process, history, that is, a God who works in these, and the positive affirmation that we can and must trust only our own reason, that is, the human god. The negation is quite as important as the affirmation. Fundamentally it is a religion of suspicion rather than of trust; its confidence in man's ability to master his fate is not so great as its assurance that there is no God who will work out humanity's salvation.

If the tactics of social planning rest on a doubt and a faith the older tactics of liberalism are no less the expression of a faith and a doubt. In Rousseau it was faith in nature and the natural, not the rational, man; in Adam Smith it was faith in the harmony of self-interest and the social good, provided for in the nature of things and not by careful adjustment; in later liberalism it was faith in natural evolution. But it was always faith in something spontaneous, more than merely human, something which was in control of both man and his environment. If liberalism rejected governmental interference in business and religion it did so because it had confidence in the ability of more or less unrational processes to lead men to a happy issue, while it deeply suspected the adequacy of the disinterestedness and of the intelligence of any group which undertook to regulate the affairs of the commonwealth. In education it reposed a large trust in a youth's own guiding interest on the one hand and in the educational influences of free social intercourse on the other. In religion it believed with Gamaliel



that truth might be trusted to win its own way. All in all liberalism was opposed to a careful engineering of life not so much because it believed in competition but because it represented an attitude of faith in the total, more or less natural processes of life, individual and social. This also is a religious attitude and liberalism may be said to have been the last, if greatly attenuated, expression of a Christian confidence in the actual world and its God.

It is contended by the advocates of the engineering point of view that the approach of faith has been invalidated by experience, that, particularly, the faith of liberalism is responsible for the present sorry estate of civilization. Instead of reposing any confidence, therefore, in the nature of things it is necessary for us to-day to increase our skepticism and to fall back upon the realization that we have only ourselves and that there is no other name under heaven by which man can be saved than the name of reason. Liberals may respond that mankind's sad plight is less due to the policy of *laissez faire* than to interference with the free operation of natural factors, that tariff walls, governmental support of private interests in foreign markets, currency management, febrile efforts to stop deflations and similar efforts to control liberty must be held to account at least quite as much as the policy of freedom. They may point out that the attempt to cure our disease by a larger measure of planned control is to give an overdose of the same poison which debilitated us in the first instance—always a very doubtful expedient. Further, the liberal will question whether the method of planning is possible when the unit to which the plan is to be applied is so complex as a modern national culture and the ends to be gained so various as those which such a culture serves. A limited end, such as the economic security of a population, may indeed be projected and provision made for it, but the complexity of culture cannot be reduced to rational terms without tremendous impoverishment. Finally, it may be objected that to organize the whole of society into an interrelated organism simply increases the chances of breakdown and insures that when breakdown comes it will be thorough, involving every part. It is of no avail to point to Russia for Russia to-day is far from being a complex culture; its experiment will not be completed for many a decade; and for the present its people live by faith—by faith in communism as a movement enjoying cosmic support—rather than on the results of national planning.

However, the issue is not between liberalism and communism; it lies rather in the question of the religious attitudes represented by the rationalism of communism in its post-revolutionary form and by liberalism

and democracy in their early, non-rational form. The former represents the doctrine of salvation by works, the latter the doctrine of salvation by faith. That liberalism is an adequate representative of the latter teaching few men are prepared to maintain to-day. Its inadequacy appears to be in part due to its lack of faith, to its dilution with a work-philosophy, but more largely to its misplaced confidence, to its trust in human self-interest. Its failure cannot therefore be interpreted as the failure of the religious attitude of confidence in the universe and in historic processes. Ultimately the faith on which democracy rests is not a faith in democracy and the final choice before men is not the choice between communism and democracy, but the choice between a rationalistic, engineering attitude toward life and a confident, trustful adjustment to a living universe. Before we abandon that fundamental faith it behooves us to inquire whether there is not a more adequate expression of the religion of faith than liberalism offers, whether there is not an alternative to liberalism which remains true to its fundamental strategy while adopting different tactics. Have we gone so far in the Western world only to find that our whole way has led us in the wrong direction? Or did we go astray but a short distance back, whither we can return and from whence we can once more set out confidently upon our life's adventure? May not the major premise, that we are saved by faith, be right, though the minor premise, that this faith may be reposed in human nature, is wrong? May there not be in democracy, as a movement of revolt against all authoritative, expert ordering of life, a religious power which remains effective, though the peculiar form which later liberal democracy has taken be quite mistaken? Perhaps democracy, in so far as it is a political expression of faith in the God of history and of suspicion of all rationalistic, expert attempts to guide life in pre-arranged grooves, can take on other forms than the form of liberalism.

The form which suggests itself to us in these days of disillusionment and uncertainty is one which defines the object of its trust not in terms of human interest, but in terms of divine agency, and which struggles to emancipate men from the new tyrannies as effectively as the old liberalism struggled to emancipate them from the despotisms of kings and creeds. For now as before the first task of those who believe in salvation by faith and who believe that social salvation is quite as important as individual salvation is the task of liberation. If we can clear away the obstacles we may trust the force of moral health, the divine "grace" which operates in society as well as in the individual, to make its own way. Thus the task of religious democracy may be defined in terms of liberation from the two great

systems of self-interestedness which have fastened themselves upon us, nationalism and capitalism. But the method of emancipation which is suggested to those who have faith in historic processes is not that of ridding themselves of these by means of an international governmental machine or of a new state-controlled industrialism. This is to place rationalism in charge and to abandon the whole religion of trust in natural processes, in God's agency. It is rather to rid themselves of these by means of non-cooperation and to await and to promote the development of a co-operative international commonwealth and of a co-operative economic order. For instead of faith in self-interest the faith of such a movement lies in the divine agency which manifests itself in co-operative life, in mutual aid, in the organic growing together of individuals and societies. We cannot believe, as did the older exponents of the social gospel, in the growth of love as an automatic process. There is evident too much of evil, too much of selfishness. Religious democracy understands that there is no road to unity save through suffering, forgiveness, repentance, restitution. But if the method of removing evil is more loving there is good reason to believe that the result will also be more love-worthy.

For those who seek their social redemption by faith rather than by works the future is by no means wholly clear. They must be content to say, "one step enough for me." They cannot blaze their trail forward with confidence that they know exactly whither it will lead them. They only know that the end is good, because it is God's end. One thing seems rather likely, that they will be forging steadfastly through the wilderness of the future after the planners and rationalizers, wearied with human stupidity, faint because of the obstacles in their road, have given up the struggle—tired radicals.

# Protestant Co-operation in Social Action

SAMUEL MCCREA CAVERT

**S**OONER or later the fortunes of church co-operation are found to involve the whole question of the function of the church in society. For the churches cannot work together without working at concrete tasks, and as to what those tasks should be, and what the policies to be pursued, there is the widest divergence of view. Indeed, it is at this point, quite as much as in the fact that we have inherited separate denominational organizations, that the grave obstacles to successful co-operation are to be found. So long as there is at one extreme a group which insists that the only business of the church is to deal with the individual soul in its relation to God, and at the other extreme a group which would have the church enter actively into all sorts of problems of organized society—industrial, economic, political, international—and between these two extremes every shade of possible opinion, the securing of whole-hearted co-operation is well-nigh out of the question. For any great advance in the practice of unity a much clearer agreement as to the social functioning of the church is an indispensable condition.

Many a good movement for church federation, moreover, though growing out of a strong and true desire for unity, is in danger of becoming spineless and anæmic just because there has not been a courageous facing of the specific purposes which it ought to achieve. Trying, for the sake of harmony and fellowship, to keep within a zone of recognized agreement, the area within which the federation has functioned has been too narrow to make any noteworthy difference either to the churches themselves or to the community.<sup>1</sup> Because it has limited its program to those items which represented an already existing common denominator among all of the groups, the federation has been shut out from the prosecution of the very tasks which might have been the most convincing demonstration of its value to community life.

One can even imagine churches becoming phenomenally successful in dealing with that baffling issue of overchurching and underchurching—so successful that both at home and abroad not a dollar was wasted on unnecessary institutions—and yet never securing thereby any vital advance for the kingdom of God because there had been no adequate answer to the question of what any of those churches, thus carefully located, was actually to do in the community.

<sup>1</sup> See H. Paul Douglass, *Protestant Co-operation in American Cities*, Chapter XXI.

### *Sainthood and the Social Environment*

In seeking an answer to this question, let us take our departure from a point at which all—even the extreme groups referred to above—can agree. It is the function of the church, all would admit, *to create saints*, men and women whose lives are dedicated to the will of God as revealed in Christ. But sainthood has to develop in society and, according to the historic Protestant teaching, so strongly emphasized by Calvin, must express itself in one's daily life and relationships, especially in one's vocation. So, even from the individualistic approach, a social order that is in accordance with and ministers to the ideal of sainthood becomes a part of the Christian goal.

In the foreign missionary movement this stands out in such starkness that many Christians recognize it as a fact there, but do not see that precisely the same thing is true at home. The church, for example, starts a mission in China, intending to confine itself to purely "spiritual" and evangelistic work. But soon it is discovered that the success of this spiritual enterprise is handicapped by a legalized opium traffic which is both a curse to the people and a reproach to so-called Christian nations that protect the traffic for their own profit. So long as this situation remains the missionary's work suffers under a crushing handicap. For the sake of the very spiritual work that he came to do he must concern himself with the social problem created by the opium industry.

As an equally cogent illustration in our own country, consider the conditions in which the farmers in the area surrounding Chicago found themselves a few years ago, as set forth in a study of the ethical issues at stake in the Chicago dairy industry. The fact, surprising to many, was disclosed that the farmers who were most active in the Pure Milk Association, and who had voluntarily adopted the practice of testing the purity of their milk, even at severe losses to themselves in not a few cases, tended also to be most loyal to the church. Here, if one may accept the results at their face value, was a connection between sainthood and social responsibility, and it was hailed as such even by the newspapers. But later studies showed that the system by which the farmers' milk was marketed in the city was so autocratically organized and so callous to the needs of the farmers that they were receiving less than the actual cost of producing milk under conditions that could ensure its purity. A continuation of such conditions would force the farmers either to resort to unsocial practices or else go out of business. As a discerning student remarked, "The social order was creating devils faster than the church could create saints."



Another principle on which there can hardly be disagreement also leads us far: namely, that the churches must *hold up Christian principles as having sway over all of life*. It has always been a part of our faith that the gospel has a universal outreach, that Christ is to be "Lord of All." But how can we make earnest with this claim if any phase of life is to be regarded as outside the range of Christian responsibility?

When the results of the study of the Chicago dairy industry were published, the *Chicago Journal of Commerce* declared editorially that "there is simply no limit now to the kind of public question which the Federal Council (of Churches) believes lies within its jurisdiction" and described the Federal Council's procedure in embarking on such a study as "a mad policy." The editorial was meant to be devastatingly critical, but a little reflection will suggest that it was an unintended compliment. For no problem which has a direct bearing on human welfare can be regarded as altogether alien to the churches. So far as any question is merely economic or political, it is, of course, outside the concern of the church; but if and when it can be shown to affect personal character and well-being for good or ill, and so to further or hinder what Christians understand to be God's will for mankind, it becomes a moral and spiritual question. Ordinarily the moral is so closely interwoven with the political or economic sphere that to treat them as separate would be to set up abstractions that have no real existence. For the church to ignore questions just because they are involved in secular affairs would be to make religion again a thing of the cloister, detached from the very conditions that most stand in need of its redemptive power.

A question like the length of the working day obviously has its technical side, which only industrial leaders can solve, but if men are forced to work twelve hours a day or seven days a week it has also a terrible human aspect which must be a direct concern of agencies that exist to safeguard spiritual values. Nor can the responsibility be evaded by saying that the men in the control of industry can be trusted to see the issue and deal with it satisfactorily. They are often the very ones whose vision is most dim—dim because it is so difficult to be sensitive to ethical considerations that run counter to one's own self-interest. Some words which Henry Ward Beecher used in defending his participation in the anti-slavery cause are still strikingly apposite. Replying to the criticism that the Christian men who held slaves understood the problem better than he could, he said:

"There is nothing more untrue than that every man understands his own business best, if by that you mean that he understands it in its largest

relations—in its results upon the general welfare; and more particularly if you mean that he understands his own business best in its moral influence upon himself, upon his fellows, and upon society. Usually, none understands the moral influence of a business so little as the men who are embarked in it. . . . The baker knows more about kneading dough, about the time it should require to rise, and about how long it should be in making; but when it is done, and I take the loaf and eat it, then I am as good a judge of bread as he is. And so it is with various kinds of business. They bring out results here and there, and the community is made to take the benefit or damage, as the case may be. And moral teachers who stand and look on—who have discrimination, large reflection, clear intuition and who, above all, judge from a moral standpoint—such men are competent to be critics of everything there is in human society.”<sup>2</sup>

### *Christian Citizenship*

If “economic” and “political” problems are also ethical problems, it becomes the clear duty of the church *to sensitize the consciences of its own members with reference to such questions and to stimulate them to a higher exercise of citizenship*. To do this is no excursion into bypaths; it is a normal and natural part of the church’s own program of Christian education. A church that is committed to training men and women in Christian character stultifies itself if it leaves out of account the whole range of human affairs in which it is most difficult to be truly Christian in one’s living.

Industrial and international problems may seldom be appropriate themes for the ordinary preaching service, for they cannot often be helpfully dealt with in an authoritative way. They require the give-and-take of free discussion, the manifold contributions of thought and insight of men of differing backgrounds of experience. They therefore lend themselves to effective treatment in Bible classes or forums or other informal groups rather than in the pulpit. The present emphasis on adult education and the popularity of the discussion method afford a new opportunity to the churches for developing a fuller appreciation of the Christian principles that are at stake in what are sometimes wrongly regarded as merely secular issues.<sup>3</sup>

At this point, however, sharp divergence is likely to arise. “Granted,” some will say, “that the church must try to develop Christian motives and Christian attitudes toward one’s fellows, it should confine itself to general principles and never become entangled in specific questions on which equally

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in an unpublished address by Prof. Arthur E. Holt at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, to which this article is also indebted for other illustrative material.

<sup>3</sup> See *The Church and Adult Education*, by Benjamin S. Winchester, 1930.

earnest men may differ." Now it must indeed be recognized that if the church identifies itself with one side or the other of a controversial issue, it is always in danger of becoming merely a party, and no longer the fellowship of all who sincerely seek to follow Christ. Yet, on the other hand, the notion that the church can really be an educational force in the field of human relationships if it "sticks to general principles," and never examines what those general principles require in concrete situations, is a serious illusion. It puts the church in the position of proclaiming platitudes which are accepted in theory but are not regarded as applicable in anything except the more simple and obvious circumstances. It leaves us in a situation in which a devout Christian like Sir John Bowring, who could write "In the Cross of Christ I Glory," could nevertheless be an agent of the British Government in fastening an infamous opium trade on China. Sir John accepted beyond question the "general principle" for which the cross of Christ stands, but he had never been led to see what it meant for the relation of an imperial power to a weaker people.

Except for an easy-going trust in the value of presenting "general principles," how could we to-day see so many men who are ardently Christian within the limit of their more intimate and personal relationships and at the same time flagrantly, yet unconsciously, unchristian in their more complex situations? Surely it is a fact which anyone may observe for himself that the man who is the soul of unselfishness within his family circle may be as hard as flint in the pursuit of self-interest when he is sitting on the board of directors of a great industrial corporation. The man who is gentleness itself to his neighbor's children may have no qualms of conscience about deriving dividends from a business that employs child labor. The man who in his immediate personal dealings would scorn to be cruel even to a dog may be as insensitive as a Frankenstein to the mass cruelty that goes under the name of war. Even from the standpoint of its own accepted program of moral and religious education, the church must in some way do more than talk about general principles! Unless it does so it cannot fulfill its true mission of being the light to illuminate the darkest places of the world.

### *"Meddling in Politics"*

"Well, then," it is objected, "you would have the church get into politics and become hardly more than another party." Whether the objection has weight depends entirely on how one defines "getting into politics." Except for a small group of single-track minds so inflexibly bent on some

particular reform that all other values are lost out of sight, Protestants can surely be counted on to hold that the churches, as churches, ought never to go into politics in the ordinary sense of the word. They ought scrupulously to refrain, and usually do refrain, from backing a particular candidate for office, or raising campaign funds for any party, or using any form of political coercion. Even lobbying among legislators in an effort to induce them to vote in a certain way, while it may be wholly unobjectionable if carried on openly and with no hidden commitments, and may even serve a necessary function in keeping a government responsive to public opinion, is ordinarily a practice that is out of harmony with the genius of the church. For other agencies all these methods are legitimate but not for one whose sole method is that of the spiritual influence of its own ideals. A church can resort to other methods than moral persuasion only at the grave peril of losing its own distinctive character as the body of Christ.

That there are many times when these very methods of politics must be used in the interest of a Christian ideal is undoubtedly true. But in the long run it is surely preferable that when these methods are to be employed, it should be through voluntary agencies of Christian citizens, associated with others who may share the same civic purposes, rather than through the churches themselves. Such organizations will generally derive their inspiration largely from the churches although acting independently of any church. The political lobby and the policeman's club are often necessary instruments in the interest of right legislation and law enforcement, but right and proper as they are in their place, they are not appropriate instruments for the church.

But does not this doom the church to sheer impotence in dealing with political problems? Far otherwise! For there are other methods, essentially in accord with the church's own genius, which in the long run are much more effective just because they avoid the danger of turning the church into something like a political party.

Those methods, as already suggested, grow out of the church's well-recognized educational function. They center around the *creation of a well-informed, enlightened and sustained public opinion*. To achieve this will doubtless leave the church still exposed to a superficial criticism of entering the field of "politics," but only from those who would prevent the church from carrying out its legitimate and necessary task of helping to develop Christian attitudes and motives with reference to public questions that have an ethical import.

That the church is not competent to deal with such questions and dis-

closes its own ineptitude when it undertakes to do so is a common charge. And it has to be admitted that there has been all too much truth in the criticism. Until recently the churches have given little attention to developing an expertness in social and industrial problems which would entitle an utterance in this field to any great respect. They have all too often assumed that all that is necessary for the solution of complicated issues is good will. The fact, however, is that the best of good will without accurate information and insight can be quite as sterile as the best of information without good will.

But what if the church should become truly competent? What if it should take its responsibility in this field with such seriousness that it would no longer allow past incompetence to serve as an excuse for inaction? What if the church should really pay the price of becoming competent?

That price inevitably includes the willingness to develop thoroughgoing study and research in the field of social and international and economic problems. Without this no competent help can be given as to what Christian principles require in these situations. A remark of Owen D. Young's with reference to the issue of war and peace suggests what is needed. He insisted that the great weakness of all the idealists in their anti-war program lies in lack of understanding of the basic conditions out of which wars spring. He showed by illustration after illustration that scanty data, misinformation, and half-truths are no less a fatal obstacle in dealing with social ills than in dealing with physical ills like the old yellow fever. And he concluded: "Facts are our scarcest raw material. What we must have is not sporadic, hectic groping after information when an emergency confronts us, but a steady, long-continued, systematic process of inquiry." This lesson, one ventures to believe, the churches are now learning. The Department of Research and Education of the Federal Council of Churches and the new attention given to the social sciences in some of our theological seminaries are only two of many hopeful illustrations of a new trend.

### *The Education of Public Opinion*

When, for example, the Federal Council a few years ago, co-operating with Catholic and Jewish agencies, secured and published the facts about the twelve-hour day in the steel industry, it contributed unmistakably to the arousing of a public opinion that could not be ignored. No "political" measures had to be taken, no legislation invoked. The effect of holding up the incontrovertible facts to the light and making an appeal to public sentiment was so great that the technicians of industry were able to find the



way, hitherto often claimed to be undiscoverable, of carrying on the production of steel without such destruction of human values as is involved in the twelve-hour day. The results in this particular case were, doubtless, far more dramatic than can usually be expected from the church's attempt to utilize the method of research, but they pointedly indicate a fruitful method of dealing with social problems which is a natural development of its own program of adult education.

Research will, of course, be merely academic and perhaps useless unless there is associated with it a definite educational program designed to help individual men and women to arrive at a better understanding of, and right personal attitudes toward, the facts in the case. And there is reason to fear that real educational work is often neglected in enthusiasm for some apparent short-cut by more political methods. Even the most ardent supporters of prohibition, for example, agree that it was a fatal mistake for the churches to relax their program of educating the individual in personal abstinence, and to trust to legislation. Legislation is, of course, necessary, but it is effective only when sustained by the strong public opinion that comes from clearly held personal convictions. And it is in the development of that public opinion, rather than in any direct excursion into political campaigns, that the most important contribution of the church is to be found. This is not to say that the political aspects of the problem can be ignored; it is only to say that they can better be attended to by voluntary organization of individuals than by the church itself.

Such a program of education of public opinion avoids not only the criticism of "going into politics" in any illegitimate sense, but also the danger of claiming to "represent" great bodies of church people when there is no certainty that they are being truly "represented" at all. And this is a danger that the church does not easily escape when it follows more narrowly propagandist methods. To stimulate people to study and to inquire into the facts, with a view to arriving at intelligently held conclusions of their own, may sometimes seem a slow method, but it can generally be counted on to achieve more solid and enduring results than attempts to secure quick action by presuming to speak for a great constituency when, as a matter of fact, that constituency may not yet have any real comprehension of the relevant factors in the situation.

If the churches vigorously develop this program of study and research as a basis for a convincing appeal to public opinion, they will find that there is little necessity for them to become directly involved in political contests or legislative programs. And they will do well to avoid any such involve-

ments. Nothing could be worse for the church, in the long run, despite all temporary successes, than to become either virtually a political party or a mere reform agency. The church must somehow fulfill its social function without ceasing to be a church. This, however, need not prevent the church, in occasional instances where a clear-cut moral issue is at stake, from taking an official stand in support of a particular law. The exploitation of little children for profit, for example, would seem to be such an obvious case of unchristian and anti-social practice that the churches would be wholly justified in supporting a movement for legislation to forbid child labor. It is not so clear, however, that it would be wise or desirable for the church to line up (let us say) for a *federal* child labor law as opposed to state laws on the same subject. When we come to the question whether a particular end can be better achieved by federal or by state processes, we would seem to have reached the point where it is no longer a question of moral principles or purposes but of technical problems of government.

### *Church and State*

Even when the churches carefully confine themselves to such an appeal to public opinion as is manifestly a part of their true educational function, a hue and cry may be raised that the principle of separation of church and state is being violated. It is important, therefore, to do some clear thinking at this point, and especially to understand both what is involved and what is not involved in this cherished American doctrine. As a matter of fact, there is a widespread misconception of what the principle has historically meant. What it basically asserts is that no form of religion is to be supported or controlled or favored by the state, and that no religious or ecclesiastical test is to be required of any office-holder. More specifically, the historic meaning of the doctrine is set forth in detail in Professor Sanford H. Cobb's masterly treatise, *The Rise of Religious Liberty in America*, as follows:<sup>4</sup>

" 1. The civil power has no authority in, or over, the individual or the church, touching matters of faith, worship, order, discipline or polity.

" 2. The church has no power in the state to direct its policy or action, otherwise than its influence may be felt in the persuasion of the public mind toward the principles it teaches.

" 3. The state cannot appropriate public moneys to the church, or for the propagation of religion, or any particular form of religion.

" 4. The church cannot look to the state for any support of its worship or institutions, otherwise than, like all other corporations, it may appeal, and must submit, to legislation and judicial decisions in matters of pecuniary trusts and foundations, the ground of which legislation and decisions is not at all religious, but strictly civil.

<sup>4</sup> Pages 15-16.

"5. The civil power cannot exercise any preference among the various churches or sects, but must hold all as having equal rights under the law, and as equally entitled to whatever protection under the law circumstances may furnish need for.

"6. The civil power may not make any distinction among citizens on account of religion, unless the following thereof is dangerous to society. Neither the right to vote nor to hold office is to be invalidated because of opinions on the matter of religion. Nor, again, is a citizen's right to bear witness, or to inherit property, to be called in question for reasons of religion."

Surely here is nothing that even remotely forbids the church to exercise its own teaching function to influence men, if it can, to think and act in accord with Christian principles as the church understands them. If the churches ever attempt to secure a control over the state for their own institutional ends, or ever resort to other methods than those of spiritual persuasion through the inherent appeal of their own ideals and principles, then, and not till then, will it be time to invoke the doctrine of the separation of church and state against the church's efforts for a better social order. Meanwhile no superficial talk about "meddling in politics" should be allowed to prevent the church from carrying out the best possible educational program for getting the public to appreciate the meaning of its own gospel in its concrete application to the most urgent social and international problems. As Walter Rauschenbusch once pithily summarized the question, the church should be to the state as "an enlightened pedagogue, always nudging toward better things."

#### *The Churches' Own Practice*

When all is said and done, the greatest opportunity of all for the churches to bring about a Christian social order lies in their practicing themselves the way of fellowship and love and brotherhood which they proclaim to the world. If in their own life and work the churches can demonstrate that co-operation and fellowship are practicable realities, then at last we may expect the world at large really to believe. Now, as always, Christianity needs not so much to be argued for as to be lived, and surely it is in the church itself, first of all, that its meaning for social life must be revealed.

# Theology and History

ROBERT LOWRY CALHOUN

FOR a long while theologians and religious historians worked side by side in essential harmony. Their disagreements were at most neighborhood quarrels between those on the right side and those on the wrong side of the street. On both sides the self-revelation of God in human history was presupposed. On the traditionalist side, theologians and historians were agreed that the voice and the hand of God are discernible most especially in the Bible and the events it records, and in various later interventions of a miraculous kind. On the liberalist side, belief in orderly, gradual evolution more or less fully displaced belief in miraculous revelation and intervention, and God was thought to discover himself in the steady flow of progress. Nowhere was there any thought of a basic rift between historians and theologians of the same household.

But for some years now there has been serious talk of separation on the ground of incompatibility. Critical historians have found increasingly irksome the continual scrutiny of their work by theologians with an ulterior interest in practical consequences. Critical theologians, for their part, have come increasingly to feel that they can no longer look to the historians for support without loss of self-respect, and that they must work independently. There are, of course, compromisers in both groups who prefer peace to thoroughgoing consistency. But the issue has been sharply raised, and it will not easily be smoothed over.

My notion here is to say something about the difficulties which have arisen; to glance at certain formidable problems which underlie them; and to suggest some tentative lines on which I think a fair adjustment might be worked out.

Given the legitimate differences in viewpoint and interest between theology and history, and given a vigorous, competent group of men working in each, it was inevitable that difficulties should arise sooner or later. History, so far as it aspires to be a descriptive science, is theoretic; its viewpoint is that of the disinterested spectator—disinterested in the sense that his prime concern is just to report as fully and accurately as possible what he sees, not to do something about it. Theology, as Duns Scotus affirmed long ago, is a "practical science" or discipline; its viewpoint is that of one who desires to know what is so and what should be done. History seeks to be descriptive, dispassionately evaluative, expository; theology seeks to be normative or regulative of human living.

When historians had made some considerable progress in their effort to see Christianity in due relation to the rest of the human panorama, they found it increasingly hard to honor the demands of their theological colleagues for corroboration of this or that doctrine, or even for cogent proof of the presence of God. They broke with traditionalistic theology over the question of miracle, and all that went with it: special divine intervention at crises of individual and social life; uniquely infallible revelation in the Bible; invasion and supplantation of human by suprahuman personality in the single case of Jesus Christ. Less quickly but no less completely they broke with liberal theology, which had shifted its primary stress from facts, or supposed facts, to values: resting its case not on miracles but on betterment through evolutionary advance; on the unique value of the New Testament and the Christian way of life; on the originality and finality of the teaching, and the divine worth of the character of Jesus of Nazareth. But for the critical historian of our day, there is no proof in the records at hand of unequivocal progress, far less of inevitable progress; there is accumulating evidence that Christianity owes far more than we had suspected, of belief and of practice, to its predecessors and its neighbors; and there is increasing reason to regard Jesus himself as a man of his own country and his own time, of whose teaching no absolute originality nor finality can be affirmed. Thus, step by step, the prosecution of rigorous historical study has led historians to forgo all responsibility as defenders of theistic faith. They do not, as historians, either affirm or deny its validity in some form; they decline to testify, as historians, even while as men they may believe.

At the same time, critical theologians have become increasingly reluctant to depend on historians for such testimony, as in any sense a basis for doctrine. Liberal theologians have been struck by two defects in the findings of historical inquiry as these relate to their own purposes. First, there is a clearer sense than we had when our knowledge was smaller, of the uncertainty and variability of historical findings as to important matters of fact. Once it is realized how far our ability to reconstruct the events of a past era is conditioned by the particular cross-section of contemporary records—gravestones, letters, account books, sheriffs' warrants, what not—which happen to have been preserved, and uncovered up to our day; and by the inescapable (though partly corrigible) personal equation that enters at once into the making of such records at the time, and into each historian's interpretation of them, judicious men will not expect certainty, absolute and final, in the factual accounts of any complex past event. Theology, it is held, dealing with the urgent question of human salvation, needs some



firmer basis than the variables of historical research. In similar fashion, the painstaking study of history as such reveals and can reveal no moral absolutes. It reveals customs, *mores*, diverse and variable, but no absolute norm by which they all may be judged; for to the historian it is apparent that the value judgments of any observer, himself for example, must appear to another observer, say his successor a hundred years hence, quite as truly enmeshed in the endless flux of social change as those which he seeks to judge. Liberal theologians, then, seeking greater assurance as to fact and as to value than history can provide, and deprived of resort to infallible authority of church or of Book, have turned toward philosophy: toward metaphysics and ethics, conceived either as analysis of general principles, or as critical examination of concrete experience, especially moral and religious experience.

But certain acute anti-liberals who reject as pernicious all such appeal to philosophy are yet more drastic than liberal theologians in their rejection of history and its findings as a foundation for theology. History, philosophy, and all human experience, "religious" or other, go by the board in one sweeping repudiation at the hands of the brilliant group inspired by Karl Barth. Theology has and can have but one foundation: God Who Speaks. But God and God's Word are wholly incommensurable with everything finite and temporal, everything human: history, philosophy, human experience itself. No more than the liberals are these men prepared to fall back on traditional authority, whether of an organized church or of Bible or creed. Their appeal is rather to a non-historical, non-philosophical, non-temporal revelation, of which it can be said only: God has spoken and this man has heard. What he has heard, or how, it is impossible to say; but for him a new perspective has opened, which can no more be doubted than daylight. Historical records, reflective thought, moral effort, mystical vision have nothing to do with it; simply it is here, from God. Theology's task is to bear witness, by antinomic affirmations, to this one overwhelming fact.

It is not hard to see beneath the surface of all these renunciations, whether by historians or by theologians, a pervasive difficulty which presents itself in at least three ways: the difficulty of construing the co-existence of absolute and relative. Reflective thinkers have struggled over it for centuries, and since it permeates all effort to think rigorously about anything in particular, it is likely to be struggled over for some centuries more. Meanwhile, its special bearing on the present estrangement of theology and history involves three points. First, as we have seen, theologians have felt

the need of finality as to *value*, and historians can neither provide it nor recognize it. Whereupon arises the question how, if at all, the ideal and the actual are related. What-ought-to-be is absolute, say the theologians; what-is at any given time and place is relative, say the historians, to what-is at other times and places, and this is just as true of particular moral preferences as of any other particular facts whatever.

The same difficulty reappears with respect to *being* or existence, no less than with respect to value, as an aspect of the real world. How, if at all, are absoluteness and relativity in respect of being or existence to be understood? Theology seeks an eternal being, that changes not; history deals with a temporal stream of events that changes without ceasing. Theology seeks a footing in necessary being, in what-must-be-as-it-is; history tells of contingent being, of what-might-have-been-otherwise. Theology seeks, in a word, absolute Reality as basis for human salvation; history seeks primarily to describe appearances, the phenomenal succession of humanly observable events. How shall these twain meet?

There appears still a third form of this puzzle about the absolute and the relative, when one is concerned with theology, for the central term in theological discussion is God, in whom *being and value* are thought to be uniquely at one. If God be regarded as at once absolutely good and absolutely real, how if at all can we think of him as related to the world of human experience? Can an infinite Being, infinitely good, have any relation to the manifold finite beings, including human persons, whose doings compose the stream of temporal events? Must we not regard such a God as wholly transcendent, unbound by relations of any sort to our murky shadow-world, and so quite undiscernible either in it or through it?

These are some of the problems involved in the present partial alienation of theology and history. It is no simple exaggeration of minor differences, nor personal disagreement on the part of over-zealous specialists. It is a natural outcome of honest, competent work in two significantly different fields; and it will not easily nor quickly be resolved.

Which is not to say that it will remain forever unresolved; nor that it will ever become as complete as the most radical empiricists in history and the most radical anti-empiricists in theology believe that it should. I think it will not, for a reason simpler to state than to establish: for the reason, namely, that with all their genuine, legitimate, and significant differences, theology and history are inseparable at bottom. I have set forth their diverse interests in the foregoing paragraphs with deliberate stress on the contrasts, as though theology were concerned with the absolute and history

with the relative alone. The whole truth is much less simple, and much more promising of some new *rapprochement*.

On the one hand, history no less than theology requires, whether consciously or no, an absolute in a certain sense of that versatile word, if its work is not to be stultified. For history as descriptive science aspires to give an account, as accurate and as comprehensive as may be, of events which have taken place. It professes to be exploration, discovery, reconstruction; not invention. It professes to approve an account given by one historian and to disapprove that of another on the ground not merely nor primarily that the one is more ingenious, more vivid, more amusing, but that the one is more probably or more nearly correct than the other. But this presupposes that an actual event described—the coronation of Charlemagne, the crucifixion of Jesus—did actually take place, having unambiguously just the character that it did have; and that the perfect transcription of just that character is the theoretic limit to which the historian must try to approach as nearly as may be practicable. Granted that the past event is forever beyond our grasp; granted too that perfect restatement of its character can probably never be achieved, and that if it were achieved we could not be sure that it was perfect: it remains true none the less that without presupposing an actual event which, though not now directly accessible, was *then* unequivocally what it was and in no slightest degree other than what it was, all talk of superior and inferior accuracy in professed descriptions of it is vitiated. For if a past event had both the total character which it had, and some other in addition, then we have not one actual past to explore and try to describe, but more than one; and if more than one, we have no way of knowing how many, and no reason for supposing it improbable that any professedly historical account, however bizarre, is accurately describing an actual past. But this is to put history virtually on the same footing with fiction, and to remove it from the class of the descriptive sciences. An actual past, then, in the sense of a series of events each of which and all of which together were unambiguously—absolutely, in this sense—just what they individually and collectively were, is a *sine qua non* for historical research. And so too is the obligation to seek and tell, as far as practicable, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about that past. This obligation, at least, and the value which involves it, the historian must regard as absolute, or nullify his own work. What relevance this may have to the adjustment of the underlying conflict with theology we shall see further in a moment.

Meanwhile, theology can no more avoid involvement with relativity,

particularity, and flux than historical research can avoid a certain absoluteness with respect to both fact and value. Most liberal theologians would grant this readily; they have no desire to exclude from theological consideration the particulars of human experience, merely denying that such particulars as historians deal with can by themselves provide a suitable foundation for theology. The Barthians would not grant it readily, I think; but their radical anti-empiricism seems to me at best no more than verbally tenable. One may say in grammatically impeccable sentences, no doubt, that God is Subject only, never object; that the impact of God's Word upon man is wholly outside of the time-series; and the like. But that such statements do not bear analysis is, I think, plain and generally recognized. Whatever be true of God, man can function only as man; and whatever the source of any impact, he must receive it in the guise of human experience or not be aware of it at all. This is not, of course, to deny that the source of the impact may include factors which, considered in themselves, are wholly outside the experience, in the sense that they do not appear in it and are separable from it. But it does deny that as impinging on a human mind, the source of the impact, whether called God or not, can be wholly unrelated to that mind. The absolute aloofness (unrelatedness) of God—or of an ideal, or of a *Ding-an-sich*, or of anything else—could obtain, paradoxically enough, only if no one thought of it, nor spoke of it, nor received any word of or about it. Once this ascetic rule of silence is broken (as it is when God speaks), a relationship is established and absolute transcendence in the sense of unrelatedness is no more. And without such relationship, not the first faint beginning of theology—not the bare mention of God nor of God's Word—not so much as a "Lo here!"—can take place. Theologians being human simply cannot be aware of absolutes which remain wholly aloof.

These comments may be taken, perhaps, as suggesting that some other adjustment between theology and history than complete alienation may legitimately be sought; since the main ground of their separation has been the difficulty of harmonizing theology's interest in the absolute with history's concern with the relative, and since it now begins to appear that in some sense, not yet fully defined, each is concerned with both. An obvious point of departure for the needed reappraisal of the basic issues involved is the diversity of meanings of the term absolute. We have noticed two of them at some length: to wit, unambiguous (thoroughgoing), and unrelated. Something that is absolute in the former sense, we have said, enters indispensably into the work of both theologians and historians; whereas what-

ever is absolute in the latter sense, though there may for all we know be entities thus wholly without relations, cannot enter into the work of either, in the sense of being known or thought about. We may for the moment, then, put aside as unfruitful the notion of absoluteness as complete aloofness or unrelatedness, and inquire how far elimination of that meaning may go toward solving the central difficulty.

But first, two other meanings of absolute must be noticed: namely, ultimate, and all-inclusive. The latter is one of the meanings made familiar by the speculative theories we call absolute idealism, absolute monism, or simply absolutism. The Absolute, in these theories, is the Whole, the All in which finite particulars and abstract universals are included, held to be a fully intelligible and systematic, if not a fully conscious, rational unity. Since numerous critical theologians, liberal and anti-liberal, are working out their views upon other lines than these, it is apparent that the demand for absolutes in theology need not be taken, *prima facie*, as a demand for the Absolute in this special sense. More often, indeed, it seems to mean simply ultimate: as we say absolute zero, absolute perfection. What is called absolute in this sense is treated as a limit to some process, ideal or actual, of analysis, of reduction, of growth, or the like, and so as displaying finality within a definite context. This clearly brings us round once more to the situation discussed three paragraphs back, and we may ask now, perhaps, where a common ground for theology and history may be sought.

The suggestion that appeals to me as most promising rests on two propositions: first, that the demands of theology for absolutes, so far as legitimate, are primarily if not exclusively for what shall be unambiguous and ultimate, and that these are matters of concern also to history; and secondly, that the stream of events which history describes, and the actual world in which they transpire, do in fact display absolutes (in the senses noted) as well as relativity and flux. If this be so, then a significant and reciprocally valuable relationship between theology and history may be expected to develop again, though not on the old lines.

To work out this suggestion would require at least another paper. I must be content here to sketch in a few clues, with no pretense at completeness. First as to the relations of ideal and actual. The historian begins by declaring that no absolute ideal, value, or obligation is to be discovered in the actual tide of human affairs: all are in flux, conditioned by time and place and many other factors. But we point out to him that at least he himself as historian must regard the obligation to get at the truth, and to proclaim it, as an ultimate for himself and for others engaged in



similar work, whether his predecessors, contemporaries, or successors. Here is at once an instance of an absolute (ultimate) ideal discernible in the midst of the flux, and a clear hint as to what more of that sort we may look for and expect to find elsewhere. This first instance is, *prima facie*, an ideal which in a certain context (*sc.*, historical study) is ultimate, with no clear indication, however, that in all conceivable contexts it would be ultimate. Taking this as a clue, two questions need to be explored. One may ask, first, whether in other specified contexts—say in bringing up children, in doing police duty, in recovering from pneumonia, in painting a portrait, in seeking a job—there are likewise discoverable ideals and obligations which for their respective contexts are ultimate. If in each situation thus examined, an ideal or ideals ultimate for that context—that is, a best possible attitude or mode of behavior, conceived as a norm—should seem specifiable or necessarily implied, that would establish sufficiently the “presence” (Plato’s word) of absolutes, even if no one of them should seem certainly to be binding or best in all situations indiscriminately. One may ask then, secondly, whether this sort of absolute—a specific, so to say, rather than a general ideal—is all that theology demands. I think it is not. But although theology has commonly, and perhaps rightly, asked for much more, I think it amply worth while to inquire what sort of theological position can be established on this less ambitious but seemingly more secure ground. For on this ground there is little doubt that history would be more at home than among more abstract principles.

A somewhat similar analysis may be brought to bear upon the second group of absolutes which theology seeks: necessary rather than contingent being; the eternal, not merely the temporal; Reality, not mere appearances. The last of these three need cause no difficulty unless, by reintroducing the notion of absoluteness as unrelatedness, which we have put aside, appearance and Reality are treated as separate and independent. But that conception of absoluteness would make all these problems not merely insoluble but unstatable. Once it is granted, on the other hand, that appearances are appearances of reality, and that reality is revealed, at least in part, through appearance, there is no need for either history or theology on this score to waive its characteristic demands.

A different sort of problem is involved in the contrast of eternal with temporal, and the demand of theology to deal with the eternal. In this sort of statement, “eternal” commonly telescopes two quite different concepts: everlasting, and timeless. The latter, but not the former, is a term wholly unsuited to characterize events, which necessarily, so far as I can see,

involve duration. Forms, ideals, numbers are timeless; happenings, including conscious experience of our sort, all endure, that is, are temporal. Theology must deal with entities of both sorts, and it seems better not to lump them both under the single rubric "eternal." As to events, what theologians chiefly object to and seek to transcend, I should judge, is not temporality (enduringness) as such, but rather transiency. But for events, or better, for experients, the appropriate contrary of transiency is everlastingness; and in spite of the obloquy heaped on this latter notion by despisers of "the false infinite," it seems to me a more promising concept for further examination where actuality rather than pure form is concerned, than timelessness can be. And if it should prove a tenable concept, an otherwise inevitable break with history would be avoided.

The contrast of necessary being with contingent being returns in a different way to the same underlying issue. Theology seeks her absolute under the guise, here, of What-must-be as contrasted with mere events, of any of which it can be said, This might not have been. When the primary stress is laid on What-must-be as Ground of all particular existence, rigorously determined in all respects to be as it is and to do as it does, and no whit otherwise, the natural outcome is to treat particular, so-called contingent things and events in the last analysis as fully determined also: an outcome familiar in Neoplatonic, Spinozistic, and Hegelian versions of theology. But that way lie the problems of freedom and of evil in their most intractable forms. I should prefer to explore further another possible turn of the phrase "necessary being": to examine the possibility of conceiving God and the world together as necessarily real in the sense, not of rigorous internal determination at all points, but merely of total and ultimate actuality, behind which one cannot go, and upon which one's life and all other lives depend. Whether this would be logically tenable or theologically satisfactory I do not know; but I am clear that theology is better off without too rigorous a determinism, and so long as the accumulating factual evidence permits, it seems best to keep the question open.

Finally, how shall we try to think of God himself? As wholly transcendent?—then history can reveal nothing of him. As wholly immanent?—then all history is his doing, and we are back at a pre-critical view. Briefly and roughly, I think the most promising way is to think of God as organizing Mind, fully actual and unequivocally good, at work in the world along with other factors among which finite minds are one group, physical processes of various sorts another. When mind as we know it in ourselves sets about to rearrange a situation, it works at once within the actual situa-

tion, and beyond it in the way of memory, anticipation, apprehending possibilities, devising plans, and so on. Moreover, it enters into communication with other minds, chiefly if not wholly through physical media, responding to them and stirring them to response of various kinds. So God I try to conceive as at work both within and beyond the actual world, ordering and reordering it through gradual advances and retrogressions, through sudden crises, and repeated healings; establishing conditions of life for finite minds and bodies, calling forth responses from them and steadily responding to them through the heavy veils of relatively ill-organized bodies and minds.

If some such account were looking in the right direction, the respective places of history and theology could, I think, be satisfactorily defined. The historian's task would be, as always, to describe more and more accurately and comprehensively the stream of actual events, at once absolute and relative in the senses we have examined. He would not and should not subordinate his effort to the views and the hopes of theologians; but he might well be alert to the main theological bearings of his discoveries and his reading of them. He would not find God by simple inspection of the flux of events, nor should anyone else do so; but he would find nothing incongruous in the theologian's effort to illuminate problems of religious history through insights gained from religious experience, and to consolidate religious insight through historical inquiry.

The theologian's effort would be to prosecute and to stimulate others to the quest for the real, the good, and God, in the lively hope that through the stream of actuality, and especially through moral and religious crises therein, there might come self-revelation of God at work. He would seek neither to override, to ignore, nor simply to echo historians and philosophers, but to complement their perspectives and emphases by his own, which would give especial attention to religious experiences and to their place in and meaning for the whole.

# Religion: Phantasy or Reality?

ALBERT D. BELDEN

RELIGION to-day, in general, and therefore Christianity in particular, has to face a double form of the charge of unreality. One of these is popular, and comes from the masses of the people; the other is academic and comes from the new psychological thought and discoveries of the time. In between these two profoundly serious entities there are playwrights and authors and journalists busy popularizing both forms of the indictment, and helping to fuse them together into the most formidable attack religion has ever had to face. The form which the popular accusation takes is in the now well-known phrase, "Religion is dope." The academic form may be summed up in the statement "Religion is Phantasy."

## I. The Indictment

It is said that in Russia the Soviet Government has placed above the altar in the Church of the Kremlin, Moscow, the announcement, "Religion is the opiate of the People." Whether that be true or no, the phrase represents a charge against religion which is widespread throughout the democracies of the modern world. Nor can we lightly rebut the charge. No institution on earth should be so humble and self-examining as the Church of Christ, and in face of a situation like this, for its own soul's sake as well as humanity's, it will do well to examine the case patiently.

We cannot fail to see the measure of justification for this verdict in the history of religion in our own land. The terrible hardships visited on the masses of workers in the industrial revolution originated from a class of employers and owners, many of whom were ostentatiously religious. Moreover, religion and morals were actually used by many, such as Paley, Wilberforce, and Hannah More, to make the pitiable slavery of the poor palatable to them.

We recall how Charles Dickens pilloried "dope" religion in his Chadband and Pecksniff, and perhaps most cleverly of all from the point of view of the "doped" Mrs. Jellyby of *Bleak House*—the poor good little woman who was all the time so keen on the dear natives of Boorioboolaga whilst her own children were busy falling down the area-steps. One has often queried whether Dickens meant Mrs. Jellyby for a picture of Mother Church, so busy just then on foreign missionary enterprise and still so blind to the sufferings of her more immediate children around her doorstep!

It is far from the present writer's intention to dispute the fact that a real religious faith is a sublime help under all conditions of human life, but when such faith is used to blind one to what *others* are suffering, and suffering needlessly and unjustly, then it becomes an opiate of the most poisonous kind. That is what has bitten into the soul of the workers. Religion has been misused again and again to make people so content within their lot that they have grown insensible to the injustice resting like a death pall upon their fellows and upon little children. While, therefore, we cannot agree entirely with some writers like James and Barbara Hammond<sup>1</sup> in their all but wholesale rejection of evangelical forces as being all of this character, one cannot but agree to the large and distressing measure of truth in the terrible limitation set to the influence of religion by this subconscious use of it to bolster up class privilege and position.

But it may be claimed matters are different now. Since those bad old days we have had Methodism and the growth of Central Missions and a new approach to the poor—Shaftesbury Societies, the Salvation Army, Church Army, Charity Organization Society, etc., etc.

Certainly, a social conscience of a kind has developed in the churches, but the workers still do not respond. Why? Because the fundamental injustice still operating in wealth distribution robs charity of all the graciousness of true love, and clothes it with the insult of the bribe. "There is no gratitude in the poor these days," one hears. How can people be grateful who have come, for good or ill, in error or in truth, to the conclusion that what is given them is but the *meanest installment of their own*, withheld from them by fraud of system if not by fraudulent intent. *That is an all but universal conviction of the modern poor.* Consequently, all the elaborate and expensive machinery of social service provided by the modern church misses its mark and will continue to do so until in some way the church can convince the mass of the people that she is spiritually and morally on their side. It is not more blankets and coal, more institutes and billiard rooms, that will move the modern masses, but a church which, like Christ, is the champion of the common people *in principle and in program.*

But it is just at this juncture, so difficult a one for the modern church, that a scientific movement from the schools of learning emerges to clinch the popular judgment about religion and to provide a philosophy for the people's attitude. The new psychology, in its main stream of teaching, tends to dismiss religion as phantasy. And here, again, we cannot afford

<sup>1</sup> *The Town Labourer.*



to adopt a lofty tone of disdain as some are attempting to do. There is much truth mixed up with this teaching—salutary truth for would-be religious people. Starting from the well-known fact of animal instincts as lying at the foundation of the human organism, the new psychology stresses the conflict that is set up, as humanity progresses in its community life, between the tendency of every instinct to express itself fully in competition with other instincts, and especially in competition with the requirements of happy and harmonious social life. As a case in point, the instinct of hunger tends in us all to express itself with primitive rudeness and ravenousness, but it is powerfully inhibited in most of us by the customs of society. Much of the energy of the instinct in its primitive condition has been drawn off into the etiquette and the art of table manners and food preparation and service. The energy of the human being is drawn from these powerful animal instinctive emotions—an emotion being the suffusion of the organism with the energy of the instinct preparatory to action. Obviously the full energy of these emotions is not used up by social life. Where does it go to? It is drawn off to become the raw material of intellectual, artistic, philosophical, scientific, and religious activities. All the life of man other than physical is explicable as the sublimation of the “libido” or energy of his instincts; the most powerful of which are those that are associated with sex, herd, and self interests. Now with the inadequate and haphazard character of our social organization it is inevitable that many and often serious conflicts should arise, bringing stress and strain upon the organism, and it is under the pressure of such conflicts that men and women turn to sublimating agencies such as art, literature, sport, and also religion. Thus, your modern, knowing young student, or even man-in-the-street, feels able to explain all the intense interest of religious people in religion in terms of psychological stress and complexes which their religion is meant to relieve. Religion is thus viewed as subtly selfish in its motive and without any more adequate object. It is a trick of the human mind to bring itself relief. Your pompous deacon is over-compensating an inferiority feeling worked into him in childhood or youth; others are filling out the starved emotional impulses of sex-desire in spiritual experiences of passion, which may be innocent enough, but are essentially self-serving. In all such religion the human organism never escapes itself, is always serving itself.

See, for example, how the new psychology would explain Mrs. Jellyby. She is a mother who cannot control her own offspring. They disappoint her self-appreciation of her proud rôle of motherhood. Very well; she

must restore her hurt pride somehow. She will mother the natives of Boorioboolaga, which happens to be conveniently far enough away for her "motherhood" in this case to escape criticism. Her mind is eased, but *her children still fall down the stairs.*

It is just here that the popular but profound novelist fulfills his task of interpretation by helping us to pass over from the "Dope" accusation of the people to the "Phantasy" criticism of the schools. He helps us to understand how morality and religion are being "found out" along these lines to-day. John Galsworthy, more obscurely in the *Forsyte Saga*, but very plainly in his great novel on brotherhood, *Fraternity*, presents us with the following interesting thesis. The only people with a social conscience in Great Britain are the well-to-do middle class. The workers haven't a social conscience; all they have is a social need. They know what they want and that they want it; they don't need a conscience about it. The aristocracy haven't a conscience about it either; they have heredity. They set out to do "what is done," and never by any chance do what isn't done. In between these two classes comes the "middle class" which, by its very position, gains a sense of balance, and is uneasy about the extremes that are upon either hand. It is between the nut-crackers. The middle classes have a sense of balance and also leisure and culture to use it. Hence they develop a conscience about social inequality. Such a thing, however, is very disturbing to people whose supreme aim in life is "comfort." Desiring comfort they must ease this social fear—hence their interest in philanthropy and reform.

But, here is the acid test, philanthropy and reform must never fundamentally affect the balance of power in society. The poor must take what is given them and be grateful, and "the poor ye have always with you" is the favorite text of the middle class. The social morality and religion of philanthropy of the British middle classes is thus seen to be largely phantasy—a subtle means of making *oneself* more comfortable. Galsworthy gives a capital instance of the kind of thing he means in *Fraternity* itself. Thyme, the gently-nurtured daughter of Hilary, has a lover, Doctor Martin, a rather terrible person for facts. He takes Thyme round the poorer parts of London. He has them marked in colors on the map, blue, red, black. Thyme trips beside him, full of happy plans for amelioration and betterment—a youthful idealist warming her hands at the fires of her own good will. When the tour is ended they are in the park resting. Suddenly Thyme flings herself face downward on the sward sobbing her heart out. The reason is made apparent in her reply to her lover's inquiry: "Oh! I

don't really care for these people. It is the ugliness of it all that offends my sense of beauty. I'm thinking of myself all the time."

So Thyme finds herself out, and thus middle-class morality, social politics, and social religion are pilloried as elaborate devices of self-relief and self-pleasing, socially useful to an extent but sheer phantasy solutions of social fears. One of the proofs that this analysis is all too true is the rather cold-blooded secret determination, which vitiates so much social reform, that no real difference shall ever come to pass in the relative positions of the various classes. All change must be very moderate, and there is an inordinate fear of going too far.

Here, then, we find a disquieting consensus of judgment from three vital quarters of society, from the masses, the scholars, and the men of letters upon religion in general and Christianity in particular, as being shot through and through with unreality, and as being only a make-believe escape of man to God. Man does not escape himself. What are we to say to it?

## *II. The Reply*

We must admit its large and disquieting element of truth. But fortunately we can say much more. In the first place, we might pause to be thankful that there is a power, namely, religion, that can take these fierce instincts as they rage in disappointment within us and give them some degree of coherent expression and preoccupation. That, to begin with. Life will always need religion for that purpose at least.

Psychology, after all, can only lay bare the processes and tendencies at work; with no unification and harmonization of these tendencies we get a dissatisfied life and often an exhausting conflict; with repressed tendencies we get a neurosis. Unification enables the processes to enter the service of the conscious mind, and there is no power so effective for this as religion.

"He draws all things to an order fair. Religion helps us to take ourselves as we are and then unifies us and remakes us!"

Secondly, we can see that to discredit the objective validity of religion is to risk serious injury to this process of sublimation. If, found out to be fundamentally selfish, religion is shown to be a mere trick, the power will go out of the trick as the spell of the conjurer vanishes when he is found out. A religion known not to be real will not sublimate—yet sublimation, says psychology, is essential for social life!

The chief reply, however, leaps to the challenge from that vein of

religion in history where self-sacrifice has been supreme. It is in the sign of the cross, the only sign in which it ever conquers, that Christianity conquers here. Much religion there has been and is, that was and is "dope," but there is another type of religion vastly different. Was religion dope for Jesus of Nazareth hanging from the cross with the prayer of forgiveness falling from anguished lips? Was it dope for Saint Paul placing his head on the block of execution? Was it dope for Saint Francis embracing my lady Poverty? Or for George Whitefield vomiting blood in his passion for souls? For John Wesley riding and preaching hard and late in perpetual sacrifice of himself? For their followers mobbed, imprisoned, persecuted, yet without malice or reviling! Or for William and Catherine Booth penetrating haunts of vice with no protection save a great love for men? This kind of thing cannot be resolved into a mere sublimation of the herd-instinct. It must be examined in its own light and right. *God is to be found with vivid reality in morality and religion wherever man has truly escaped himself!* "Whosoever seeketh to lose his life shall find it." "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God." The Great Other does not appear till self is surpassed. But then He appears!

The same reply attaches to the charges of phantasy-religion. The acid test of reality is the victory over that secret inner core of selfishness. That this has been successfully achieved over and over again is indisputable. Again, it is not the *root* of the impulse to religion that matters, but the *fruit* of it, the goal of beauty and power in which it fulfills itself. Let a man "accept himself" and "just as he is" give himself to God, and he will see the "selfishness" taken up and used by that other for the ends of altruistic love.

Meanwhile the new psychology, in its "explanation" of religion, is making all the more reasonable the fundamental conversion of the human soul demanded by Christianity. It is showing us plainly that the divine reality of religion cannot emerge until the self is over-passed; and the center of attention and devotion shifted from self to the Other!

There is then a kind of natural conversion that the new psychology admits. It is willing to concede, indeed must do so, that religion does "turn" human minds from being stormy battlefields of instinctive conflict into more or less harmonized and unified abodes of peace. Instincts are sublimated, complexes are aired and resolved by the power of religion. *There is a natural conversion.* This natural conversion, moreover, is common to all really powerful religions, whether primitive or developed. This, too, we must concede. Professor Underwood has written fascinatingly and

with great illumination in his *Conversion, Christian and Non-Christian*, about this. His account of the degree and value of "conversion" in other world religions helps to sharpen the challenge to Christian conversion. Is all conversion merely natural? Does it never step outside nature? Does it never carry the soul beyond itself and into a new life? Does it never become new birth but remain merely a refinement of the old being? That is the challenge the modern evangelist must answer.

What are the poles of true Christian conversion? Men may be changed by religion but inadequately. They may be changed from dirty sinners to cleaner ones. They may be changed in certain areas of feeling or activity, but not over the whole of their being or life. Is it possible that much Christian conversion in the past has been of this inadequate character, "natural" conversion masquerading as "supernatural," a change that did not change sufficiently, was not radical and thoroughgoing enough? Alas! it is quite certain. Much conversion has been undoubtedly phantasy-conversion—conversion motivated entirely though secretly by the self-instinct—a fear-reaction and therefore a selfish one. The selfhood of the person involved has not been transcended or fulfilled in a true self-giving—it has simply escaped to a subtler form of selfishness. It is this that explains what is called area-conversion—those types of change that pertain curiously to only one phase of the soul's interest in life: intellectual area-conversions which are mere theological conversions often involving only a change of thought and are doctrinaire and aloof from life; emotional area-conversions, flooded with feeling yet curiously and determinedly impractical and confused in thought; volitional area-conversions, where there is a change of life, often limited to one feature, but where there is no attempt to revise opinions or ideals and very little appreciation of truth or love values.

It is this fact of purely *natural-conversion* that explains the curious hitch that occurs all too often between an apparent acceptance of the Lordship of Christ and the ethical fruitage of acceptance. It explains an Elmer Gantry and many another unworthy preacher and minister of the gospel. Especially does it explain those most tragic failures that break upon the rock of the sex instinct.

Here, of course, "self" is most deeply entrenched in man—here it fights for predominance with peculiar fury. Failure here is failure everywhere—victory here is all but victory everywhere. This is why the sex ethic will yet prove the supreme battleground between the church and the world. Already the world ethic of marriage is shaping itself with



apparently no interest in chastity or belief in continence as either desirable or possible.

"He that is begotten of God doeth no sin," says the apostle, and in that statement there is an undoubted truth. Let a soul really escape itself and reach God and all motive for sin disappears, the *nature* is changed. But there may be a big difference between a change in the soul and *the* change. The right and full escape of the soul to God is not the easy ready-made thing that a cheap evangelism sometimes tends to suggest. Its initiation and its technique may be sublimely simple, but its achievement involves a profound travail, even as of birth, in the soul.

Our evangelical forefathers used to declare that "the state of nature was not the state of grace." It is a useful distinction though we should make it in a different way from them. They were thinking of the distinction between a mystical righteousness of God and the claims of ordinary human honesty and goodness. But for us, thinking in the light of evolution as God's method of creation, we can see a deep and illuminating distinction in it. What is the state of nature? We see it vividly in the animal world. It is a way of life dominated by the self-instinct. So marked is this that obviously it is the explanation of the great mechanism of the natural world culminating in the curious "menagerie" the earth carries. Nature manufactures "selves" and a "self" is made by self-concentration.

The "individual efficient in his own interests," as Benjamin Kidd expresses it, is nature's goal, and her very successful achievement. This is animal-nature, and it has its own ethic or customary way of behavior—an ethic that never passes beyond reciprocity of action. "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" is a useful phrase in which to sum up the ethic of nature—that is, of animal behavior. "A little piece of sugar—and a little trick." "But you bite me!!! and you look out!!" The story of Androcles and the lion illustrates it perfectly. On their second meeting in the Roman arena, the lion, remembering how Androcles helped it in the desert, resolutely refuses to eat him. But Androcles and the lion should meet a third time. Then the "natural ethic" would be tested indeed. "So!" the lion would argue, "he helped me when the thorn was in my paw, and I did *not* eat him in the arena. We are quits! Now I may have my dinner!" The animal ethic of reciprocity—sometimes called "justice" by human animals—this is the highest "state of nature." It can be very refined, very intellectual. It is still the general ethic of mankind. *But in it there is no redemption.* That is the glaring, awful fact. To be good only as others are good, to regulate your behavior by the other animal—this is

to make evil set the pace for good—it keeps society gravitating toward the level of its most selfish and evil members. There can be no human salvation on that method, as Jesus warned us. "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." "If ye love them that love you what do ye more than others?" Do not even the *heathen* the same? The state of nature is not the state of grace. Grace, the most beautiful word in human speech, means the very opposite of this animal ethic. It is the going out of love to the unlovely and unloving, it is the stoop of wealth to poverty, of holiness to the sinful, of the wronged to the wrongdoer, it is all that we mean by forgiveness, by that "mercy" which "becometh a monarch better than his crown." It only comes into being as the last conquest is won over the "self" and the "self," gathered in a true self-possession, devotes itself to a higher interest than its own. This new attitude of the "self" is essentially "redemptive." It sets, inflexibly, a standard of inviolable love up to which other lives must come, by which it will stand unto death and from which it will never descend. It thus becomes a new rallying level for society. It is, to quote Kidd once more, "the individual efficient in the interests of others"—a new creature.

Here then the "poles of Christian conversion" come into view. For this radical opposition between "self-preservation" and "self-devotion" as the dominant instinct in life is the issue that Christ thrusts peculiarly upon men. He does so by his cross as well as by his teaching. "Whosoever seeketh to save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." But such a change shifts the biological level of the soul from the animal world to a higher kingdom—it shakes the animal-human organism to its foundation—it involves a self-revolution that in its inception is often attended by emotional agony, but certainly in its out-working means a perpetual spiritual warfare.

Conversion so interpreted is more than a sublimation of natural instinct undertaken for pure self-relief and carrying the soul no further. It is an over-passing of inbred, natural selfishness in a launch-away of the soul to God, as real, as concrete, as *biological* probably in its ultimate achievement as the launch-away of a butterfly from its chrysalis!

But finally, such conversion carries the individual out into the splendor and spaciousness of the divine sociality.

Christ's ultimatum of new birth to human nature is seen by the foregoing to be grounded in a profound necessity. Man must rise from the animal to the divinely human, and the divinely human is perfectly social.

In his statements about conversion Jesus is quite plain about this. "Except a man be born again *he shall not see the kingdom of God.*" Except ye turn and become as this little child *ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.*" Conversion is a means. The goal is a Society of Souls living together in the Spirit of God. Conversion is not for individual salvation merely—it is not in order to store up bright specimens of humanity in a kind of eternal celestial museum. It is for the enrichment of the kingdom of God.

That society is eternal. The kingdom of God for Jesus was quite immediately real. It possessed the unseen. It was the only real world there is! This world of ours is not yet real—it is only becoming so. It is in process. But beating down through and around all the life of lesser growing worlds like ours is the one true world of God and his family, into which all children can only enter as they achieve the *nature* of that kingdom. "Thy kingdom *come*," Jesus taught us to pray. "Thy will be done *as it is done in heaven.*" Heaven is just the divine social order, which is ever seeking to colonize this planet. The church is, or ought to be, the nucleus of that colonization—the society of dedicated and associated personalities through whose opened souls and surrendered lives God's unseen kingdom may become the visible city of God on earth. Therefore the church, in its internal organization foreshadowing that ultimate city of God, as the nucleus of that new order, must organize her life on the divine principle of self-devotion, not on the worldly principle of self-centeredness. She must become in our day what she was in Christ's day—the people of the Way.

Her industry and commerce, as one case in point, must not be like that of the world. "*Not so shall it be among you.*" A system of private profit culminating at intervals in universal war is *not for her*. For her the corporate life is utterly sacred, and the only true goal of individual being. She is God's pioneer of organic racial salvation—the body of Christ doing his deeds, expressing his ideas, for the saving of all the world.

## Discussion

### Professor Macintosh on Personalism

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN

PROFESSOR Macintosh has given all readers of *RELIGION IN LIFE* (Vol. I, No. 2) something to think about, whatever their view of God may be. I "felt my heart strangely warmed" when I read his discussion. Here is a writer who is not satisfied with traditional phrases, who in criticizing my view has taken the pains to understand it precisely, and with whom I feel myself very largely in agreement.

The agreement is something to be welcomed and emphasized in these days of doubt and conflict. In my recent little book, *Is God a Person?* (The Association Press, 1932), I have said that the *Religious Realism* volume is far more conspicuous for its agreements with personalism than for its differences from it (p. 35). It is a great satisfaction to note confirmation of this statement even in Professor Macintosh's attack on personalism. He and I agree that God is personal and good, but that evil is real and that natural evil is not "the direct expression of the immediate will of God for man." We agree that man is free and responsible, and that there is natural evil not due either to man's sin or to God's deliberate choice. Further, we agree in denying that natural evil is due to any devil or other evil principle external to God; all forms of Manichæan dualism are false. And naturally we agree in the belief that if personalism be true, there is "a very good case" for my theory!

Although we agree, as against absolutists of every sort, that it will not do to say that all apparent evil is real good in the ultimate, we differ in the account we give of the relation of natural evil to God. I maintain that there

is in the eternal nature of God something which is not willed, and which is the source of suffering and delay in the realization of value. That something I call The Given. Professor Macintosh regards this view as inconsistent with the idea that God is "through and through good," and therefore he locates the source of suffering and delay in an "independently real" physical reality. In so far as he bases this suggestion on a distinction between "ideas" and "works" in the life of a personal God, most personalists would agree with him, for they distinguish between knowledge (idea) and will in God. But this peace-offering from personalists will not be acceptable to the realists, for Professor Macintosh intends extramental "works," whereas the personalist recognizes no extramental impersonal reality.

Let us examine Professor Macintosh's proposed realism. It contains the following factors: (1) Physical reality is "independently real"; yet (2) God "formed the physical universe as his body"; so that (3) natural evils are not the immediate product of a new creative act; but (4), at least in the biological realm, nature manifests a "free creativity with which the divine Creator endowed life even in its most primordial and rudimentary forms"; therefore (5) everything "when created is free from evil," and God's inner nature remains good, although his free creation goes astray. Just one question on this last point: What is the evidence or authority for the view of the primal perfection of a nature, now red in tooth and claw, other than Genesis 1? Yet this Garden of Eden view is essential to Professor Macintosh's whole solution of the problem of evil.

This view is what has in recent times been called deism or creationistic dualism, and is substantially in harmony with

the solution of the problem of evil proposed by F. R. Tennant. If, after thoughtful consideration, I find myself unable to agree with Professor Macintosh, I owe it in fairness to him and to the cause of truth to state briefly, in the following paragraphs, my reasons for disagreement.

(1) A physical reality which God forms as his body does not seem to be wholly independent of his will, although it is called an "independent reality."

(2) The distinction between the personalistic view that physical evils are the immediate product of a new creative act and the realistic view that they are the mediate product of an old creative act does not seem relevant, since in any case the Creator is responsible for his creation. Pushing creation into the remote past does not alter the fact that creation creates.

(3) The free creativity with which God endows at least biological nature (the evils of inorganic nature being left orphan) seems to imply a panpsychistic form of personalism. In other words, the "independently real" functions as a solution of the problem of evil only when it is endowed with the power of free creative choice and so is regarded as essentially personal. Yet the unity of physical nature—organic and inorganic—makes the supposition of many free finite creators very difficult to understand.

(4) God seems to be made more responsible for natural evils on Professor Macintosh's theory than on mine; for his theory makes the creation of nature with all its possibilities of evil a deliberate act of God's will, while mine denies that nature is throughout an act of God's will since it contains factors not merely unwilled by God (like the free evils of nature on Macintosh's view), but in every sense uncreated by him—merely Given.

(5) The essential objection to my theory is Professor Macintosh's belief

that God is not "through and through good" on my view and hence is not worthy of worship. Professor Macintosh knows that I hold to the perfection of the divine will. Yet he thinks that The Given is not good. I agree that The Given taken separately is not good, and that we must worship the whole divine person, if we worship at all, not an abstract will or an abstract reason. But the same logic that makes him repudiate abstract will and reason (which he wrongly thinks I worship) induces me to repudiate the view that the divine personality is not good because the abstract Given is not good. The Given taken by itself is not attractive or "worshipful"—neither is the Cross, taken by itself. The Cross is a part of the experience of the Christian God and, not because it is a Cross, but because of the love with which it is borne, the Cross adds to God's "worshipfulness." I cannot see why a battling, suffering, cross-bearing God is not absolutely "worshipful," if his will is absolutely loving, even though neither his will nor any will external to him created the Cross. Does not Professor Macintosh tacitly assume, without any proof, that only omnipotence is worthy of worship?

(6) If personalistic theism is difficult because of my theory of The Given, any form of theism is at least twice as difficult on his view, for Macintosh has two Givens to my one. God, on his view, confronts: (a) a Given external to him in the free natural evils of the created cosmos, and (b) a Given of some sort within God that would lead him to create such a cosmos. Professor Macintosh explicitly grants that the cosmos contains evils that "for the time being obstruct and retard the realization of [God's] will."

(7) The anti-personalistic denial of the immanence of God in nature involved in Professor Macintosh's view, creates serious difficulties as to God's present relation to the world. If the



world does not now reveal God, but is a system of created free creators, how can we reason concretely from the existence of the world to the existence of God?

For these reasons, I believe that my view leaves fundamental personalism intact. Professor Macintosh's alternative theory abandons personalism, and with

it any clear view of God's responsibility for and relation to the world or of the unity of the natural order. He gains a conceivable view of the divine nature, but one insufficiently supported by evidence.

NOTE. The editors regret that this discussion cannot be continued in future issues of RELIGION IN LIFE.

## Book Reviews

**Thunder and Dawn, America's Appointment with Destiny.** By GLENN FRANK. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.50.

*Thunder and Dawn* is the record of Glenn Frank's personal "fight against fatalism." It sets forth his "tentative victory over the post-war cynicisms." "The contention I want now to argue," he writes, "is that, in the midst of the indisputable decline of the West, to which the prophets of doom rightly direct our attention, there has been in progress a storage of beneficent forces which, if the West can but recruit the requisite statesmanship for their direction, may mean rebirth rather than death for the social order." President Frank's argument is based upon an extraordinary range of knowledge and presented in the scintillating style that characterized the brilliant editorials of the *Century Magazine* when the educator was editor. His thought is clear, cogent, and convincing.

He insists that we must turn our minds to "the strategy of survival." "Our leaders have failed us, we have failed our leaders. . . . A leadership that is uncertain about to-morrow is likely to be a bit unnerved about to-day. . . . The leadership that has determined our policies for using goods and distributing wealth has proved inferior to the leadership that has developed our

processes for making goods and producing wealth." This survival will be achieved not by rejecting the machine but by releasing its benefits. "My arguments say only that the machine economy is a tool of emancipation that Western man has not yet mustered the wit to use wisely."

But such use of the machine depends upon the development of a sound philosophy. "Western man is now the victim of a widespread ineffectiveness and insecurity of economic enterprise, not because his separate enterprises are technically ill-conceived, but because the Western economic order as a whole lacks a workable philosophy of the social function of industrialism and the inter-relationships of its separate parts." Western man must find his "messiah in his mind," must create the "genius to co-ordinate." Hence Doctor Frank pleads for a new Renaissance, a New Reformation, a New Industrial Revolution. He repudiates dictatorship whether proletarian, plutocratic, or personal as a method of achieving these goals, believing rather "that any renewal of Western civilization that is to mean more than a mere re-establishment of the old order of things under new names must be, in the deepest sense of the word, a religious movement. It must deal with the roots of life." Hence this book is not "the picture of a finished product." "It

offers only the suggestion of a process. It presents no sketch of the City of God. It deals rather with the Politics of God."

President Frank is a realist. He sees root causes of present situations in the pagan ideals that have ruled the West. "Power has been the goal of the state. Profit was the goal of the economic order. Pleasure was the goal of the people." He knows that educational institutions are often "readier to support a press-agent than to subsidize a Socrates." He is aware of the fact that "our Republic began as a government by trusted and uninstructed representatives," but that "it has virtually become a government by mistrusted and instructed delegates. We began with the theory of responsible government, but we have gone over, bag and baggage, to the theory of responsive government." He knows that "Versailles failed to supplant Verdun," that "World politics was dragged to the level of ward politics."

The author realizes that constructive change is essential if revolution is to be avoided. He abhors revolution and believes it unnecessary in a democracy since "The caste system sometimes needs revolution to tap a fund of unused genius in its lower social classes. Democracy does not. Democracy is doing this tapping all the while."

In his chapter, "Rallying Cries of Western Advance," he presents certain basic concepts that must be enthroned if revolution is to be averted: (1) The idea of a cultural nationalism; (2) the idea of an economic internationalism; (3) the idea of a rationalized politics; (4) the idea of a mass-conscious industrialism; (5) the idea of a socialized religion; (6) the idea of a well-bred race; and (7) the idea of a realistic pacifism."

This is a treatise no thoughtful man can afford to miss. The sheer beauty of its style, the thought-provoking nature of its argument, the exceptional

worth of its proposals, and the self-crediting quality of its philosophy, make it one of the books of the day. The reviewer makes bold to express the wish that Glenn Frank had dealt with the question of whether these changes can be effected without facing the exceedingly difficult problem of the ownership of the machine. Will present-day profit-making ownership become "mass-conscious" and personality seeking of its own accord? Will it, if willing to do so, make the changes soon enough to satisfy the masses who believe the machine is destroying them? But will the machine run efficiently if socially owned? Will creativity be stifled in the atmosphere of social control? We need a book that will sketch the mechanics of social reform. Philosophy and motives we have; mechanics we need.

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**Piety versus Moralism.**—By JOSEPH HAROUTUNIAN. New York: Henry Holt & Co. \$3.00.

This book is Volume IV in the *Studies in Religion and Culture* in the *American Religion Series*. It describes with great detail the gradual disintegration of the old Calvinism in the evolution of New England theology. If this book does nothing else for the reader, it must convince him that an enormous gulf separates the religious thinking of our forbears from our own. One finds oneself, in turning these pages, in a theological world as remote from our own as if it existed a thousand years instead of a bare two centuries ago. It persuades one that there must be something divine in Christianity that it has been able to survive the treatment it has received at the hands of its friends.

The book follows step by step the loss of one Calvinistic position after another in the steady on-march of the new hu-

manitarianism. It shows that such debates as these are not won by argument but by the glacier-like progress of a new spirit in the world. It was thus that such problems as the wickedness of the world, the necessity of regeneration, the transcendent glory of God, the nature of the church, the fate of the sinner, the cross and the wrath of God, and free will and determinism were really settled. The stars in their courses fought against the Sisera of the old Calvinism and brought about its downfall. Incidentally, one must admire the personal piety of the men who sought to defend an outworn theological system and their dialectical skill. One watches in these pages the fencing of acute and saintly minds.

The book is a scholarly treatise, and shows broad and accurate knowledge of the literary background and sources of its subject. It should be an invaluable aid to the historical study of old New England theology. A great merit in the writing of the book is that the story is told largely in the words of the theologians themselves, rather than in the words of the author. There is just enough of the author himself to connect the different strands in the argument. But one gets the argument itself in the words of its formulators.

The transition from the old theology to the new is suggested rather than related. The chapter on the Unitarian Revolt is one of the best statements of the genesis and development of the new liberalism to be found in print, with a beautiful and adequate account of the personality and influence of William Ellery Channing. An all too brief "Epitaph" fails to point out the diverging courses of liberalism and orthodoxy after the "system" of Calvinism had been definitely abandoned. This may have lain, however, outside of the main purpose of the book.

Footnotes are avoided to good advantage. The notes in the back of the volume show how carefully the writing has

been documented, and there is a complete and invaluable bibliography.

RAYMOND CALKINS.

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### A History of Christian Thought.

By ARTHUR CUSHMAN MCGIFFERT. Volume I, Early and Eastern. From Jesus to John of Damascus. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.00.

It is announced by Doctor McGiffert that this is the first volume of a probable three-volume work, the second volume of which is now in the press. In this book the author gives a most excellent critical and historical analysis of Christian thought until the time of Irenæus. He then specializes in a treatise of thought in the Eastern church from Clement of Alexandria to John of Damascus.

To all those who have been, or are, careful students of the author's previously published volumes on *The God of the Early Christians*, *The Apostles' Creed*, *A History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, *The Church History of Eusebius*, and Volume II, Chapter III (the footnote on page 149 in the volume being reviewed herewith is incorrect in the chapter reference) of *An Outline of Christianity*, much of this, his latest publication, will not be new. The great value of this book lies in the fact that Doctor McGiffert, who is pre-eminently qualified by virtue of his many studies in this field to write a history of the thought of the early Christian centuries, has here gathered all together in a comparatively brief and very interestingly written volume.

To indicate the thoroughness of this treatise, as well as the suggestiveness of the subjects given particular attention, a list of the chapter headings will not be out of place. They are: Jesus and His

Disciples; The Apostle Paul; John and Ignatius; The Gnostics; The Apostolic Fathers; The Apologists; Irenæus; A Short and Easy Way with Heretics; Montanism; Clement of Alexandria; Origen; The Monarchians; The Doctrine of the Trinity; The Nicene Council and After; The Doctrine of the Person of Christ; Dionysius the Areopagite; and John of Damascus and the Eastern Church of the Middle Ages.

Doctor McGiffert's method is to stress the practical aspects and to deal with phases or schools of thought without indulging in technical controversies—a method that is to be commended. He writes that Paul was still much of a Jew after his conversion, yet he does not appraise Paul's teaching in the light of a Jewish background and influence. On the contrary, he discusses Paul as a practical and well-guided mystic. He sidesteps the problem as to whether or not the apostle John or the presbyter John wrote the so-called Johannine books. He writes a definite appraisal of the doctrine of apostolic succession as set forth by Irenæus, terming it simply "A Short and Easy Way with Heretics." In his general characterization of the distinctive teachings of the Eastern Church, he is not so clear as was A. V. G. Allen in his *Continuity of Christian Thought*. In his chapters dealing with Marcion and Gnosticism he reiterates what he has already set forth at greater length in his *Apostles' Creed*, namely, that most of the phases of the creed arose to combat specific Marcionitic teachings.

We have very greatly needed this volume and the series of which it is the first. For several years we have had Doctor Fisher's *History of Doctrine* and Seeberg's *History of Dogma* as texts in this field. Students and teachers of the history of thought will be eager to have Doctor McGiffert quickly complete this very significant treatise, so splendidly begun. In the meantime this particular volume stands forth as the work of a

master authority, of one who is especially qualified to assemble in a discriminating fashion the essential things of early Christian thought, to make a connected narrative out of the maze of early documents (including Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret), and to present a finished product that is dependable, brief, and illuminating.

GAIUS JACKSON SLOSSER.

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**The Emotional Currents in American History.** By J. H. DENISON.  
New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.  
\$5.00.

"The real destiny of man," it has been truly said, "depends not upon his material or intellectual progress, but upon what he admires, what he loves, and what he hates."

This sublime truth has been ignored by historians, with some notable exceptions. They have chronicled the rise and fall of empires; wars and revolutions; the migration and fortunes of races; the events and external facts of human progress. But all such annals are superficial. The springs of human action, from which flow all that is most significant in history, are from within. The heart is not only the greatest motor in the human body, but in society.

Benjamin Kidd in his illuminating books has stressed the exceeding value of the altruistic emotions, not only in the evolution of man but also in civilization. The newer sociology also exalts the psychic forces which give form and pressure to society.

A real contribution to this growing enlightenment has been made by J. H. Denison in his masterly volume, *Emotion, the Basis of Civilization*, which has been characterized as "a new way of thinking," and "a new kind of history." This author in his *Emotional Currents of American History* does not ignore the

primacy of ideas and ideals. "We have found," he writes, "that in the minds of men there are great currents of feeling that run from age to age, based on certain ideas, and generated, sometimes by churches, sometimes in the heart of the family, sometimes in the instruction in schools. All these are power houses where strong currents are developed, and where old currents are reinforced and raised to new power."

He states further that "the object of this book is not to present historic facts which are the result of independent research. My object is to induce you to read over the story of familiar events and mark the emotional forces that brought them to pass and the emotional waves which they in turn have set in motion."

Amid the swirling turbid currents of our national history, in which religion, politics, and ethics have been strangely and tragically mingled, this author in a masterly manner portrays "the two great streams, one of which combines all the conservative feelings of the old America, while the other gathers up all the insurgent impulses of the new America, the incoherent aspirations, socialistic and individualistic of the new element, seeking to break down the old tradition and dominate American thought and politics."

This is a most timely and suggestive book in the present crisis of American affairs. With real prophetic fervor the author warns us against the baser masteries which have divided us and brought us repeatedly to the verge of spiritual and financial bankruptcy.

Is not this the exalted mission of history, to bring home to the individual the kinship between the forces which strive for the mastery within him and those that are the protagonists on the arena of nations? As Emerson, in his famous essay upon *History*, writes: "We are always coming up with the facts that have moved us in our private experience and

verifying them here. All history becomes subjective; in other words, there is properly no history; only biography. . . . Broader and deeper we must write our annals—from an ethical reformation, from an influx of the ever new, ever sanative conscience—if we would trulier express our central and wide-related nature instead of the old chronology of selfishness and pride to which we have so long lent our eyes."

DANIEL DORCHESTER.

Ozone Park, N. Y.

**Life's Adventure. The Story of a Varied Career.** By ELWOOD WORCESTER. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.00.

Elwood Worcester is one of the choice spirits of our generation. He is one of the bridge builders between the old and the new. Brought up in the evangelical and churchly tradition of western New York, educated in Leipzig, Germany, where he studied psychology under Wundt, philosophy under Fechner, and the higher criticism under Delitzsch, he sank piers deep in the substratum of two generations. Thus it came to be that the superstructure of his thought and life was very firmly anchored.

In his own words we have the story of this transition from the old to the new. It is a tragic story, begun at the age of seventeen when his father died, leaving his mother and sister in dire poverty and dependent upon his meager earnings as a lad peddling coffee and as a young freight clerk in a railroad office. How this youngster determined to get an education and how he worked his way through Columbia University and spent three years in Germany is a tale of moral heroism and American enterprise.

The sequel of the story is known in all the churches. Elwood Worcester, professor of psychology at Lehigh Uni-



versity, rector of two prominent Episcopal parishes, founder of the Emmanuel Movement, lecturer, preacher, author, is a name familiar to all intelligent people.

A more readable, fascinating book than *Life's Adventure* will be hard to find. It has all the interest of a novel combined with the information of a biography and a history of our own times. He is a marvelous story teller and has a tale of action and thought, fishing and hunting, sailing and tramping, preaching and healing, teaching and pastoral ministry to unfold which holds the attention from the first chapter to the last. In its pages the reader has something of the charm and illumination which his friends have found in his delightful companionship.

JOHN HOWARD MELISH.

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**The Minister, The Method and The Message.** By HAROLD ADYE PRICHARD. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

Canon Prichard's book is not always profound nor wholly self-consistent, but it is on fire. It will kindle a fresh love of preaching and fresh faith in preaching.

The three parts of the book are indicated by the title. There are three chapters in each part. The material is double sifted, for most of it has been tested out in lecture form.

Particularly well done is the chapter on Preparation and Delivery. Nine men of preaching power are chosen: Bell, Robbins, Coffin, Cadman, Stewart, Bowie, Fosdick, Norwood, Newton. How do these men go about the business of preparing to preach? Under the skillful questioning and editing of the author, they talk to us intimately, tell us things we really want to know. The young preacher still working out his technical

salvation will be interested to learn that three of these men write and read their sermons, five write but speak without manuscript, often without notes, that only one speaks without writing. The nine are all audience-conscious. They try to do something to people when they preach. "The preacher must know definitely what he wants to do," says Doctor Newton. The first step President Coffin takes is "to ask what I feel the congregation most needs, and then try to meet that need." Doctor Bell makes clear what he has said elsewhere, then he asks the questions "To whom am I going to speak?" and "What is my object in speaking?" before he takes up the questions "What am I going to say?" and "How shall I organize the saying of it?"

The message is discussed with boldness. More questions are raised than are settled. Some of Lippmann's ethical contentions are given a Christian orientation. Dewey would welcome the author's "rescue corps" made up of "disciples of relativity." Many will put a question mark after the whole passage ending, "Christ is the Way and that is all." That is not all. He is Truth and Life. Nevertheless the Message is kept profoundly Christocentric.

From beginning to end the imponderables are given their rightful first place in preaching. As one follows the book down into the dust and confusion of our day he never gets far from a central shrine. God, not the preacher, is the hero of the book.

ALFRED H. BARR.

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Chicago, Ill.

**The Music of the Gospel.** Edited by STANLEY ARMSTRONG HUNTER. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$2.00.

It is not possible to review this book in the ordinary way, nor would it be

profitable to attempt to do so. It is a compilation by Dr. Stanley A. Hunter of the contributions of twenty-six outstanding preachers, each discussing his favorite hymn. Among the contributors are the compiler; Calvin W. Laufer, D.D., the eminent Musical Editor of the Presbyterian Board of Publication; Alexander MacColl, D.D., who made the great hymn of Dr. Louis F. Benson his choice; Albert E. Day, Pittsburgh's great Methodist preacher; Tertius van Dyke, son of the Rev. Henry van Dyke, who discusses his father's beautiful "Joyful, joyful, we adore thee," and others quite as prominent.

Nine of the twenty-six hymns were written since 1900. That such a large proportion of those selected were written so recently should be heartening to those who feel we are living in a time when worthwhile hymns are not being produced. Realizing that many thousands of hymns have stood the test of time, it is remarkable that nine are of such recent date. The nineteenth century does not share so well proportionately, seventeen being selected, ranging in point of time from 1825 to 1888. Of the remaining two, one, by Watts, was written in 1719, and the other, presumably by Saint Bernard, in the twelfth century.

The book is refreshing because of the range of subjects treated and the variety of styles of presentation, each being different from the other. Tertius van Dyke tells how the view of the mountains from the campus of Williams College inspired his father to write "Joyful, joyful, we adore thee." William E. Brooks in a convincing way disposes of the moving story usually associated with "O Love that wilt not let me go." William C. Covert gives a delightful, though too short, biographical account of Maltbie D. Babcock, while Oliver Wendell Holmes' "Lord of all being, throned afar" is interestingly discussed by J. Sherman Potter.

The book deals primarily with the hymns. One wishes there had been more said about the tunes to which they are set, for, after all, hymns are to be sung, not read or talked about.

For the preacher or the layman interested in hymnody the book is decidedly worth having—not just to read through and lay away, but to keep in an accessible place where it may be referred to frequently.

R. G. McCUTCHAN.

Depauw University, Greencastle, Ind.

**Jason Lee, Prophet of the New Oregon.** By CORNELIUS J. BROS-  
NAN. New York: The Macmillan  
Company. \$3.00.

The opening of missionary activities among the Indians of the Pacific Northwest comes to its centennial in 1934. The advance guard came under Jason Lee, sent out by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The trail into old Oregon went through southern Idaho. The author of this timely biography is a professor at the University of Idaho. He comes with a freshness in his approach and adds a distinct contribution to Oregoniana.

Much documentary light never before employed is turned up; it is gotten from federal records, church and newspaper accounts, such as the extensive collection at the University of California, assembled years ago by H. H. Bancroft. This text avoids the controversial edge employed by early writers on Lee, Whittman and the Catholic missions. However, it confines itself to sorting out source materials for readers to form their own conclusions. The headings and footnotes reveal the love of the historian who passes from one fact to another without extended personal reactions.

Fourteen chapters present the life of Lee, his ancestry, youth, call, sacrificial labors and death; the Flathead deputa-

tion, Hudson Bay activities, incoming settlers with the beginnings of government and the founding of churches. A retrospect includes, "Lee's vision of Oregon's future was prophetic and reveals a statesman's grasp and foresight." Much material appears in Appendices that libraries will desire.

The romance of old Oregon is receiving better attention and Jason Lee is coming to his own. This new text adds much new material and does well in presenting Jason Lee as the prophet of the new Oregon.

JOHN M. CANSE.

Minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church,  
Montesano, Washington.

**Indiscretions of a Preacher.** By  
FREDERICK W. NORWOOD. New  
York: Harper & Bros. \$2.00.

This book is mistitled for American distribution. In Mr. Hoover's country "indiscretions" signify at least mischief, denounceable mischief. In this volume indiscretion has the respectable connotation of frankness.

Two thirds of the book consists of the autobiography of the famous minister of City Temple. The incidents recorded may seem to be chiefly interesting to his friends. The discerning reader, however, will look behind a British foreground and find the human story of a brave struggle against disheartening obstacles. From poverty, obscurity and remoteness, a gifted and gallant soul climbed to one of the most conspicuous of preaching thrones.

The remainder of the book is a discussion of rather miscellaneous subjects, like World Unrest, Gandhi, Military Force, Agnosticism, Jesus and Small Things. Doubtless these are the author's lectures and sermons at their best, though the reader is left with the impression that any number more of equal quality could have been added. Doctor Nor-

wood has the touch of the artist. When one is wondering why he closes his book with a discussion of "Small Things," he deftly introduces a justifying remark that he started out to record the striking things in his life and had come to realize that the small incidents had been more influential.

The chapter on "World Unrest" is the best part of the book. It is about as eloquent and penetrating a piece of writing as any person has put out recently.

JOHN W. LANGDALE.

Book Editor, Methodist Episcopal Church, New York, N. Y.

**Aids to Christian Belief.** By FRANCIS  
J. MCCONNELL. New York: The  
Abingdon Press. \$1.00.

Every page of this little book is characteristically McConnell, which means that every page is flavored with the unique saltiness of one of the most fascinating minds of the contemporary world. Bishop McConnell's thinking is essentially realistic in the sense that it never wanders far enough away from the actual homely events of the everyday to lose sight of them. Thus he carries his own protection against the vagaries of merely idealistic speculation and, at the same time, illuminates the commonplace with the glow of his philosophic insights. One imagines him pulling himself up short sometimes in the midst of his meditations with a sharp "What of it?"; and one also imagines him letting his mind play with experiences until he reads into them his deeper answer to "What does it mean?" Sometimes this very interplay results in his saying a profound thing so simply that one almost fails to realize how profound it really is. This is emphasized in his use of illustrations. Out of wide reading, far travel, and the gift of imagination, he has developed a series of illustrations that are practically parables in themselves. I do not know of any other

preacher who has his power for the development of stories that combine dry humor with searching penetration. He uses these stories of his just as parables, thrusting them in and letting his reader draw his own conclusions from them. Following the subtle implications of his words is a major part of the excitement of hearing or reading him.

*Aids to Christian Belief* consists of a series of lectures presented at Wesleyan University and the University of Illinois. It is a discussion of underlying attitudes of mind that prepare one for deeper Christian insight and experience. It is the revelation of a personality rich in intellectual power and equally rich in spiritual certainty. Bishop McConnell is a "religious expert," and this book is a fragment of his personal testimony.

FRANK KINGDON.

Minister Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church,  
East Orange, N. J.

**What I Owe to Christ.** By C. F. ANDREWS. New York: The Abingdon Press. \$1.50.

This is a most interesting and most moving and yet perplexing and confusing autobiography of one of the most devoted Christian men of our day. The very story is a paradox. It is a book of words sincerely written to please Christ and yet beginning with the declaration—"Christ, our Lord and Master, seeks from us deeds, not words." But in reality he seeks both. The same unconsciousness of confusion is found in some of Mr. Andrews' positions regarding the relation of doctrine and life, of Christ and truth, and of the radical divergences of attitude attributed to our Lord and Saint Paul. The story is clearly unfinished also. The development of thought and spirit—more of thought than of spirit—which is so fascinatingly traced is obviously not ended. The influences of new apprehensions of mind and spirit, of heredity,

of physical factors, of associations taken in or reacted against, so clearly revealed, are still to act. But the other aspects of this noble self-analysis are the ones to dwell upon—the simplicity, the purity of soul, the true mysticism, the passion for Christ, the brotherhood, the courage, the loyalty, the sensitiveness of conscience, the love of the highest, the unconquerable hope. It is a story which should call us away from all else and with all to Christ.

ROBERT E. SPEER.

Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., New York, N. Y.

**The Head of the Corner.** By LOUIS MATTHEWS SWEET. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.00.

The reading of this reverent and spiritual interpretation of the place and significance of Jesus in early Christianity is one that will be most rewarding to the devout student of the New Testament. The volume is the outcome of many years' thought and study to discover the historical process by which the personality of Jesus entered and became a part of the religion which he founded. Critical work done by scholars on the Synoptic problem, the Johannine question and other New Testament problems is taken for granted and for the most part accepted. It is the evaluation of the mind of Christ and of the spiritual consciousness of the men who bore the earliest testimony to the content of that mind that is the chief concern of the author.

Fundamental for his thesis is the historical reality of Jesus. With M. Goguel he claims "that the historical reality of Jesus alone enables us to understand the tenet and development of Christianity, which otherwise would remain an enigma and in the proper sense of the term a miracle." In support of this belief, excellent reasons are given for historical trustworthiness of the testi-

mony of the outstanding first witnesses of the gospel, Paul, John Mark, Luke, Peter and James the Lord's brother.

The chief value of the book lies in the two chapters, "Fact and Interpretation," and "Jesus and Essential Christianity." The power of the personality of Jesus is shown in the way it transformed the categories which were used to interpret him, Messiah, San Juan, Lord, Saviour, in its emphasis on the two significant elements in Apocalypticism, "the refusal to identify the world order as representing the will of God and the conviction that the consummation cannot wholly be the result of the evolutionary world process." We see the transforming power of Jesus also in the way he infuses with life and significance the four great Christian doctrines, the Fatherhood of God, Christian conduct, the idea of forgiveness, and the hope of immortality. This power transcends death and dissolution, "for if the disciples had not had a conscious experience of his presence and power after his death, neither the New Testament nor the Christian Church could ever have been."

J. NEWTON DAVIES.

Drew University,  
Madison, N. J.

**Jesus and The Gospel of Love.** By CHARLES E. RAVEN. New York: Henry Holt and Company. \$3.00.

Canon Raven undertakes this study in the conviction that "The Christian faith rightly interpreted and consistently followed gives vision and power essential for solving the problems of today." The source and final meaning of the Christian faith is Jesus, who supplies the world with a "revelation of God in terms of human personality: Jesus is God incarnate; transcendent and immanent are reconciled; the unity of the divine and human is the primary postulate of religion."

Neither Q nor Mark, he declares,

lend any support to a "reduced" interpretation of Christ. The synoptists, as well as John, not only certify to the historic fact of Jesus, but are definitely against any classification or explanation of him as solely an ethical, apocalyptic, Rabbinic, Gnostic, or Hellenic Christ.

The Incarnation attests the real union of God and man and is not an "intrusion of the supernatural but a revelation of the true character of the natural." Kenotic theories are wholly rejected because based on a cosmology no longer tenable and a symbolic mythology wholly foreign to the Gospels. When Tertullian, Augustine, and Anselm separated the death of Christ from his Life, they not only gave a "transactional" meaning to the Atonement and made salvation "magical and artificial" but produced a theology "based on metaphysics and mythology rather than upon history and experience." Severely critical, as the Canon is, of Patristic and medieval dogmatic, one must not overlook his generous appreciation of the genius and service of the Fathers.

His critical theories are at variance with many modern scholars. He dates Q and the Synoptics before 69 and holds the "Fourth Gospel was written by John, the Apostle, in his old age." John gives us a "portrait not a photograph," but a portrait neither Hellenic nor Gnostic, not even Pauline, but essentially historic. While he finds the categories of John—light, life, and love—best fitted to describe Jesus, his free use of Q, Mark, Luke, and Paul should make impossible the misrepresentation that "his Jesus is essentially a Johannine Christ."

He emphasizes repeatedly the unity of the natural and the supernatural, creation and revelation. The world, as conceived by Christ, is God's world, consequently, "Time, space, history and nature are alike sacramental in His thought." While size and suffering in the universe create difficulties they neither "diminish the worth of person-



ality nor deny the love of God." For the Canon anthropomorphism is more reasonable than hylomorphism or biomorphism. A dualistic supernaturalism is illogical in view of the twofold facts of cosmic history: "continuity of process and the emergence of real differences."

Essential as is Christological speculation, he reminds us that communion with Christ is the supreme fact, not our dogmatic. We must never, he continues, employ sub-Christian metaphysics or categories lower than the personal, for religion is the "achievement of the whole personality." Apollinarian, humanistic, Barthian, Freudian, Augustinianism are all inadequate interpretations of Jesus.

While the summary fashion in which Canon Raven disposes of opposing views may disturb one, it is most refreshing to find a modern writer with clearly defined convictions based on thorough scholarship and an independent study of his sources. His analysis of religious experience and his constructive statement are particularly valuable. His study will not only inspire a careful survey of theology and the New Testament but most of all a reverent devotion to the Christ who is the "perfect example of human excellence and the perfect embodiment of Deity."

JOHN W. HOFFMAN.

President Emeritus of Ohio Wesleyan University.  
Delaware, Ohio.

**On Being Alive.** By WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.00.

Whether the intensity of the life of to-day is good, depends upon what we are alive to. Doctor Bowie has set before himself the task of showing, especially to young people, how to direct personal choices in the most satisfying way.

But can one direct by choices? That brings on an illuminating discussion of Behaviorism. Long ago the delightful

scientist-evangelist Henry Drummond worked out, the question in terms of biology. Doctor Bowie is in line with the present-day discipline of psychology.

We must be alive to something—Nature, People, Truth, Poetry, God, Life after Life. Life is rich and full and satisfying in the ratio of its openness to the elements of the spiritual, intellectual and social personality. If our life is dull and narrow and unsatisfying that is due to the vacuum in which it is lived.

But what shall we say about being alive to God and a future life? Here is the age-old and modern question as to whether God is. Humanism comes in for criticism as Behaviorism earlier. Comte's Positivism, even with its cultus, failed to satisfy. "Thou hast made us for thyself and our heart is restless until it rests in thee." Does not intellectual honesty as well as the demands of our emotional nature make us religious?

FITZGERALD S. PARKER.

Editorial Department, The Cokesbury Press.  
Nashville, Tenn.

**The College and Society.** By ERNEST HATCH WILKINS. New York: The Century Company. \$1.75.

This study of the purpose of the American college, with proposals for a change in its program, is by the President of Oberlin College, immediate past President of the Association of American Colleges, graduate of Amherst, for many years Professor of Romance Languages and Dean at the University of Chicago. The writer thus states his proposal:

"Up from the high schools to-day there are coming two groups of students: a non-professional group and a pre-professional group. For the former group there should be provided a new type of college, with a three-year course, devoted primarily to education for the five fields of social living. For the latter group the existing four-year college will continue

to serve: but it should, in the first place, recognize and capitalize the division into upper and lower halves; in the second place, devote its lower half primarily to education for the five fields of social living; and in the third place, conceive the task of its upper half as being essentially an endeavor to further the maintenance and the development of human society—a society shot through with problems which menace its very existence, a society rich in the possibilities of and as yet undreamed-of fullness of life.”

President Wilkins believes that many colleges should be reorganized, some of them becoming three-year colleges only, and some three-year colleges, which he calls General Colleges, giving possibly the L.A. degree (Laureate in Arts) with two years of specialization following, all this work to be conducted on the honors principle, for which the degree of Master of Arts would be awarded. The four-year college course is believed to be a chance evolution, in no way sacrosanct. The development of junior colleges and the inadequate resources of many four-year colleges to offer four years of work satisfactorily are arguments for the reduction to a three-year program.

The author states that college training should include preparation for home life, earning a living, citizenship, the enjoyment of leisure, and philosophy and religion. As far as possible, actual participation in these activities ought to be carried on during the college years.

Proposals that are unusual, deserving consideration by thoughtful students of the American college, are: the abolition of all grades except “failure,” “satisfactory,” and an “honor” grade; a criticism of the usefulness of fraternities; a vigorous support of the quarter system instead of the semester plan, with the first quarter of freshman year to be spent primarily in orientation; one department for all modern languages with emphasis upon reading, not speaking, the language;

a decrease in the importance of the ancient classics in the college curriculum; the proposal that definite courses be offered in family life, occupations, and at the end a “final philosophical survey”; the only required courses for all students would be one year of English and one year of physical education.

President Wilkins evidently has in mind many of these proposals for Oberlin College, one of the strongest Christian colleges in the Middle West. Although not himself a clergyman, he lays much emphasis upon the place of religion in education. He urges particularly the value of “shared worship.” He believes that in general participation in the activities of the town churches on Sunday is more desirable than a separate college service. He does not favor required chapel exercises.

Whether one agrees with all the proposals or not, readers will find these one hundred and fifty pages stimulating, and an excellent summary of the problems facing the American college in 1932.

JAMES L. MCCONAUGHY.

Wesleyan University,  
Middletown, Conn.

**A Planned Society.** By GEORGE SOULE. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

**Government by Co-operation.** By EMERSON D. FITE. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.00.

Two excellent books on different phases of the present-day problems in political economy come to us from the well-informed minds of George Soule, one of the editors of the *New Republic*, and Emerson D. Fite, Professor of Political Science at Vassar College. Utterly different in their approach, each brings a ray of hope to a generation almost lost in despondency at the apparent inability of society to find its way out of the depths of the present world-wide economic depression.

So many of us have come to look on each new deliverance of our writers in the field of political and social economy as just another book that George Soule's *A Planned Society* comes as a surprise. Much in the vein of the modern medic he diagnoses the case, consults the findings of modern research, and then prescribes. His book sets forth clearly and concisely the dilemma of a sick world caught between the claims of liberal capitalism and the proposals of social radicalism. Particularly clear is his analysis of the trends of thought and action of the last decade which laid the foundation for the present debacle. His careful analysis of all the proposed remedies, including Socialism, Communism, Syndicalism, Consumers, Co-operatives, Distributivism, Anarchism, and Marxianism, set over against the present faulty status of capitalism, lays the groundwork for his main contention, namely, that man is a creature of organization and plan and that it is possible with care for him to plan his way out.

Mr. Soule bases this plan on two conjectures: If we planned for war, why not for peace, and if Russia finds a workable five-year plan, why cannot America discover a plan looking years into the future having, however, different objectives than the Russian venture? Briefly his objectives are higher wages, the gradual investment of capital in productive facilities and a nonfluctuating extension of credit in proportion to the increased consumption which the plan shall develop. For the development and consummation of such a plan he proposes a National Economic Board. As one views the hit-and-miss attempts of our present government to alleviate the suffering of millions, which grows worse constantly, one is inclined to see in this book a starting point for constructive thinking on how we may plan for a recovery over a period of years step by step.

However, it is not as simple as it

sounds. The reader finds himself questioning throughout as to whether the plan is too radical for the capitalistic system, too naïve for a government checked in counterbalance as is ours, or too conservative for the growing group of radicals that has lost faith in the present capitalistic system. The author himself pictures his own plight in the last chapter when he says, "At this point arises a discordant chorus of ridicule and skepticism . . . ranging from extreme right to extreme left."

Norman Thomas in a recent speech says the world needs more co-operation between groups, to which Emerson Fite replies, "You would have thought he was advertising my book *Government by Co-operation*." The reader does not gain the impression, however, that Mr. Fite is fighting for socialism. He is rather presenting a series of facts which argue for the present system.

The book is well written but not as easy to read as is *A Planned Society*. Perhaps this is because its purpose is different. It is a technical treatise setting forth example after example of intergovernmental co-operation. Beginning with a chapter on the co-operation of the states in 1789 in the formation of the national government, the author goes on to take up co-operation between the national government and the states in matters of wide range including agriculture, prohibition, and public health. The succeeding chapters treat the legislative, executive and judicial features of national co-operation with state governments. From this point the subject narrows to interdepartmental co-operation in nation, state and municipality; discusses co-operation of private business at home and abroad; and concludes with a chapter on international co-operation.

The reader gains many sidelights on social problems as he reads. If the field is new to him he immediately feels the cobweblike texture of the world in

which he lives. So many lives crossing and recrossing bewilder the simple-minded man who seeks a straight path through life. Out of it all, however, he finds the author constantly leading him to the summation in the last two paragraphs of the book. "In the latter part of the nineteenth century and in the twentieth century, down to the present time, people have come to realize that rivalry, jealousy, competition and struggle, whatever benefits they may confer, involve a waste of time, of energy, of money and of capital stock in general. The competitive system has cost the world too much. A new order of society is in process of evolution and in it co-operation is bound to play a larger and a larger part."

FRED B. NEWELL.

Secretary of the New York City Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, New York, N. Y.

**Deuteronomy: the Framework to the Code.** By A. C. WELCH.  
New York: Oxford Press. \$3.75.

The main problem in Old Testament criticism at present concerns Deuteronomy. The Graf-Wellhausen criticism has held sway for over half a century, but in 1924 Doctor Welch published his *Code of Deuteronomy*, in which he sought to show that Deuteronomy is much older than was generally believed, and was, in fact, the lawbook of North Israel. This lawbook, he holds, was taken over by Josiah in an effort to weld together the sundered kingdoms, and made the law of the whole corporate body in 621 B. C. The passage in Deut. 12. 1-7, which orders the centralization of the cult, is a late addition and forms no part of the original lawbook; there is nothing in Deuteronomy, outside this section, to warrant the presence of the Law of One Altar.

That was a sufficiently startling thesis and it has met with very lively opposi-

tion and provoked extensive discussion. In these discussions Doctor Welch has revealed himself as "a bonnie fechter" and if his conclusions have not met with acceptance it cannot be said that they have been refuted.

In this volume the author seeks to strengthen his case and makes plain the relation of the various codes. The Decalogue is oldest of all; follows the Law of Holiness with its natural habitat in Judah and Isaiah its typical prophet, the prophet of holiness. Later still is Deuteronomy "impregnated as no other law in Israel, with the ideals of prophecy" (p. 199). Its kinship in language and ideas is clearly with Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah, the prophets of North Israel; hence its strong ethical emphases as opposed to the ritual holiness of the earlier Law of Holiness. After the Exile the conservative party was in the ascendant and life was cast in the earlier modes of the Law of Holiness, and the issue was Rabbinism. Perhaps it was inevitable, and there is truth in the saying of A. B. Davidson: "Deuteronomy and Pharisaism came into the world on the same day."

So much for the Code. Having made his finding here, Doctor Welch has still to lay his account with the framework, that is, the hortatory chapters that precede and follow the Code itself. Now this framework is notoriously difficult, and all commentators have resorted to the theory of editing. "The material of which the framework of the Code is composed presents an appearance of extreme disorder which seemed to defy any efforts to group it" (p. 8). It has been edited and re-edited until the original is almost beyond recognition. Doctor Welch, however, is not inclined to agree with the majority here, holding as he does that there are few, if any, traces of editing. Here he seems in error. Is there any document in the Old Testament that has escaped the editorial process? Why should Deuteronomy be an exception in

this respect? The analysis of this framework, however, is conducted with acumen and a high degree of insight, but a large degree of subjectivity must adhere to all such judgments. The author himself would admit that much here can only be tentative, but he would hold that his hypothesis best fits the facts, and it cannot be denied that there is much in the history to support his contentions.

Professor Welch writes in a manner worthy of his great original; the work is characterized by all the marks of profound scholarship and with the enthusiastic zeal of one who has discovered great spoil. Despite the cogency of many of his arguments and the skill of his analysis one may legitimately feel that the last word has not yet been spoken on this difficult question.

JOHN PATERSON.

Drew University,  
Madison, N. J.

### **The Course of Christian Missions.**

By W. O. CARVER. New York:  
Revell Company. \$3.00.

This book, by the professor of Comparative Religions and Missions at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, aims to meet the need of a history and an interpretation of foreign missions. It is forged on the anvil of the class-room and doubtless represents in outline the form which a "survey course" has come to take after many years of conscientious and capable teaching. Its fundamental principle is: "It is not possible to hold steadily the true Christian idea of God, without undertaking to share that idea with all men."

Instead of beginning with the first Christian churches, or even with Jesus, the author starts from Genesis—the call of Abraham—and develops a "background" of unusual spread. He moves leisurely through the early period of the church and of the expansion of Christianity, and only at the end of eleven

chapters does he begin his discussion of modern missions. Chapters twelve to nineteen cover the world outline, and there are closing chapters on American missions to Europe, on missions to the Jews and on "home" missions in North America. The completing stroke is entitled "Hitherto," and is a declaration of the author's approval, in the large, of what has been done, and of his faith in Christian Missions as "the means by which men co-operate with Christ to create out of the broken fragments of humanity one new human race."

This is an interesting and valuable book. It has an unusually lengthy "background." Its chapter on American Protestant returns to Europe is not commonly found in such volumes. It has greater color and warmth than Robinson, who is largely a weary list of facts with occasional color in Anglican recitals. It does not have the limitation of an obtruded pre-millennial point of view, as does Glover. It is persistently conservative in theological tone, at times charging certain defections in given fields to theological laxity where others would assign other causes. The bibliography is distributed by chapters and will be specially useful where the volume is used as a text-book. The index, one must say regretfully, after several attempts to use it, is incomplete, incongruous and irritating.

The author has attempted to maintain a proper balance and perspective, although it is doubtful if he has succeeded in that difficult task. In his preface he fears that in a work involving so many details there will be mistakes of fact, and such there are, but none which very much mar the usefulness of the book, as they usually involve minor matters. Is not the real difficulty that the author has attempted what is well-nigh impossible? The Christian missionary enterprise has now come to be so large and involves so many elements that no one volume can achieve the task of presenting it all.



When Latourette goes to almost a thousand pages in what he admits is an incomplete history of missions in China, and when we consider the large volumes of Richter on India and the Near East, of Paik on Korea or Du Plessis on Africa, what may we hope for in a single book which attempts to cover the entire world? It simply cannot follow all details of development or all the agencies of promotion.

It would seem that a course in Christian missions in our day will best set forth in outline the status of the younger

churches as they are developing in their present-day environment of cultural clashes and commercial and political ambitions; in short, as part of great world-movements. Thus the detailed account can be left to the larger studies of the separate fields, or better still, ultimately to those volumes on the history of the indigenous churches which are certain to appear, let us hope, at the hand of those who are native to their soil.

W. D. SCHERMERHORN.  
Garrett Biblical Institute,  
Evanston, Ill.

## Bookish Brevities

So much that is good in the religious writing of to-day is dull and that which is bright is so often empty.—*Chicago Church Leader*.

If I get any money, I shall buy books and if there is any money left, I shall buy bread.—*Erasmus*.

A book that has never been read has never been born. I like my copy to show signs of life and use. Literature is a form of companionship, and surely we do not love our friend less because he has a wrinkle in his coat or a crack in his shoe.—*Christopher Morley*.

To a recent anniversary a London urchin brought a halfpenny as a contribution toward a tribute of flowers for Lax of Poplar. "Mother say," he added, "if it have been your funeral she'd ha' sent a shillin'."

Drastic indeed has been the effect of the economic depression upon the output of books. A year ago it was being said that books were appearing in such numbers that to review them all was becoming like setting a counting machine to tick off the waves on the beach. Now

publication is so infrequent that there are scarcely sufficient excellent books to provide material which will fill the review columns.

Early in his life Mendel began to experiment on the hybridization of plants. When only a schoolboy he wrote:

"May the might of destiny grant me  
The supreme ecstasy of earthly joy,  
That of seeing, when I arise from the tomb,  
My art thriving peacefully  
Among those who are to come after me."

In the marvelous practical biology of to-day, that prayer is abundantly answered. "So long as people are allowed to think what they like they are bound to think something so hard that they will be eager to kill anyone who thinks something else." Thus writes the distinguished Gilbert K. Chesterton. In present-day America, it is they who are not allowed to think what they like who generate violent attitudes toward those who differ from them.

Dr. Henry N. Wieman gave a series of lectures at a Pastoral Conference held at Berkeley, California, a few weeks

ago. After his last address, Dr. E. P. Dennett requested Dr. John Wright Buckham to characterize the lecturer. This he did with a comprehension worthy of the consideration of many to whom Doctor Wieman is irresistibly attractive and bafflingly ununderstandable. "Henry Nelson Wieman, D.D.—an original and undaunted thinker and seeker after God; a devout mystic; an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile; a belated Socrates, a gadfly of the theologians, stinging us out of our sluggishness; an alert and fertile mind offering its findings freely but without due deliberation; an *unwilling personalist*, with each step in his conception of God—Integration, Process, Interaction, Mutuality—unconsciously approaching nearer to Personalism; a gift of the Spirit to the churches—if they know how to understand and appraise him rightly."

*What I Owe to Christ*, by C. F. Andrews, declares Doctor Whitham, "has a quietness and a modesty I have never known surpassed." The Dean of Manchester pronounces it to be a human document of very great and real importance, "one of the most illuminating records of a man's growth in grace and in the knowledge of God that it has been my good fortune to read."

Persons who differ robustly with the political opinions of the author are freely acknowledging the moving quality of this spiritual autobiography. Its sheer simplicity may conceal the greatness of its achievement. Such a portrayal calls for keen and delicate perception, for a ripened knowledge of the ways of human nature, for a noble sincerity in the measurement of motives.

Mr. Andrews inherited more than his share of traditional prejudices. Admitting them without rebellion, he never allowed them to bar him from anyone he could help. Like his intimate friends, Tagore, Gandhi, Schweitzer and Stanley Jones, he has not been allured by fame

from an intimate understanding and sympathy with lowly persons of every race and color. Abused and lauded as have been few men of our day, he shows no rancor and no exultation.

His fellowship is with a God who is the lover of every child of man and of all the little things of earth. Against the background of such splendor of divinity the sins against love loom up for the reader with a new ugliness of evil. Yet to Andrews, in his naïve confidence in the conquering Spirit of the Christ, problems which to most are desperate are only incidents.

Reading this humbling and inspiring volume one remembers the custom of Alexander Whyte, who after he had read a worthwhile new book would write to several friends, "Have you read —? If not take Coleridge's advice, 'Sell your bed, only in this case your bolster will do, and buy it.'"

Henry Seidel Canby has been questioning fifteen hundred of his readers about their opinions of books. One out of every three consulted lives in towns and villages, the others in cities. Two out of three acknowledge they are not buying as many books as before, but only one half of these concede that the decrease is due to reduced income. Twelve out of thirteen admit that the radio and the movies are distracting them from books. Three out of four confess that the magazine absorbs much of their reading time. One out of three says that he permits a review to be a substitute for the book. Ten out of thirteen hold that overstatements have destroyed their confidence in book advertisements. Less than 7 per cent state that membership in book clubs limits their book purchases and only a little more than 4 per cent that they concentrate on book club choices. In this connection, it is to be remembered that the investigation was made among thoughtful people, few of whom would permit their reading to be

selected for them. It is agreed that as many good books as ever are being published but that there are far, far too many poor books issued. "There are never too many books which have to be written because the writers have something worth the time and effort to say."

Joseph Hergesheimer has been dilating upon the tough job of being an author. He holds authorship to be a ridiculous way to spend the short time at the disposal of man. It is to him a species of solitary confinement at hard labor without the tangible restraint of bars and bolts, imposed by an inner vanity and dim hope. There is no such thing as a good unlabored sentence, much less a paragraph, while books are more impossible of accomplishment than merely difficult. Their creation harasses an author's days and torments his nights.

He avers that a novel which required two years of bitterly hard labor, following half a lifetime of devastating experiences, may be a distinguished success and make two hundred dollars for its author. This is optimistic. A second book by the same hand, equally or even more admirable, might bring a return of five hundred dollars. For six "excellent" novels an author of note received less than nine hundred dollars.

Such comment is salutary for those who would have the honor of authorship without paying the price of that extended knowledge of life which permits its interpretation with an individual accent, also the price of self-denial and weariness through which comes the accomplishment of expression. Content and communication are both essentials in

the composition of literature, the test of which is that it influences life.

Mr. Hergesheimer does no justice to the creative artist who writes out of that need for the communication of experience which affords him a sense of release. Moreover, he shows a singular unacquaintance with the psychology of the artist as distinguished from that of the artificer. With the artist the creative process continues most of the time in the subconscious mind, from which, in unpredictable periodicity, it rises into exhilarating expression.

Louis Untermeyer thinks of poetry as the perfect expression of a thought.

Since the appreciation of poetry is being taught so generally in public schools it might be supposed that its reading is extending rapidly.

The opposite appears to be the truth, with anthologies as a common exception. Benet's "John Brown's Body" and Masters' "Spoon River Anthology" may be accounted to be accidents of surprising popularity. Yet a generation that has known Edna St. Vincent Millay, Robert Frost and Edwin Arlington Robinson cannot plead any absence of the attraction of uplifted art.

Mencken holds that poetry belongs to spring alone as the literature of adolescence and intimates that a poet past his twenties is an anachronism.

This fixation of Mencken is an index of something more serious. If the materialism and utilitarianism of the day are permitted to continue to blindfold us to the value of poetry the subsequent loss in emotional sensitiveness and depth of feeling will prove to be impoverishing.